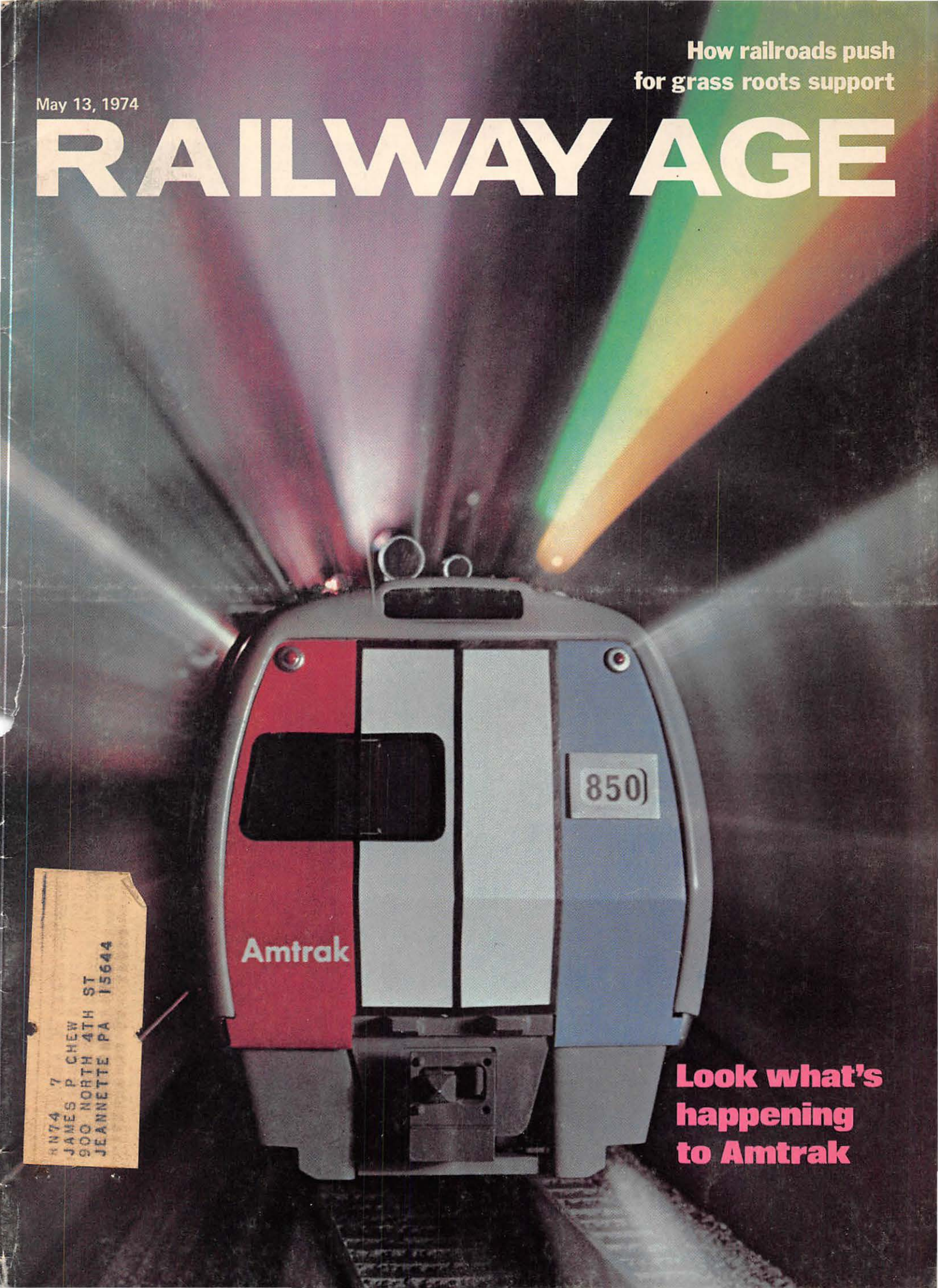
How railroads push for grass roots support

May 13, 1974

RAILWAY AGE



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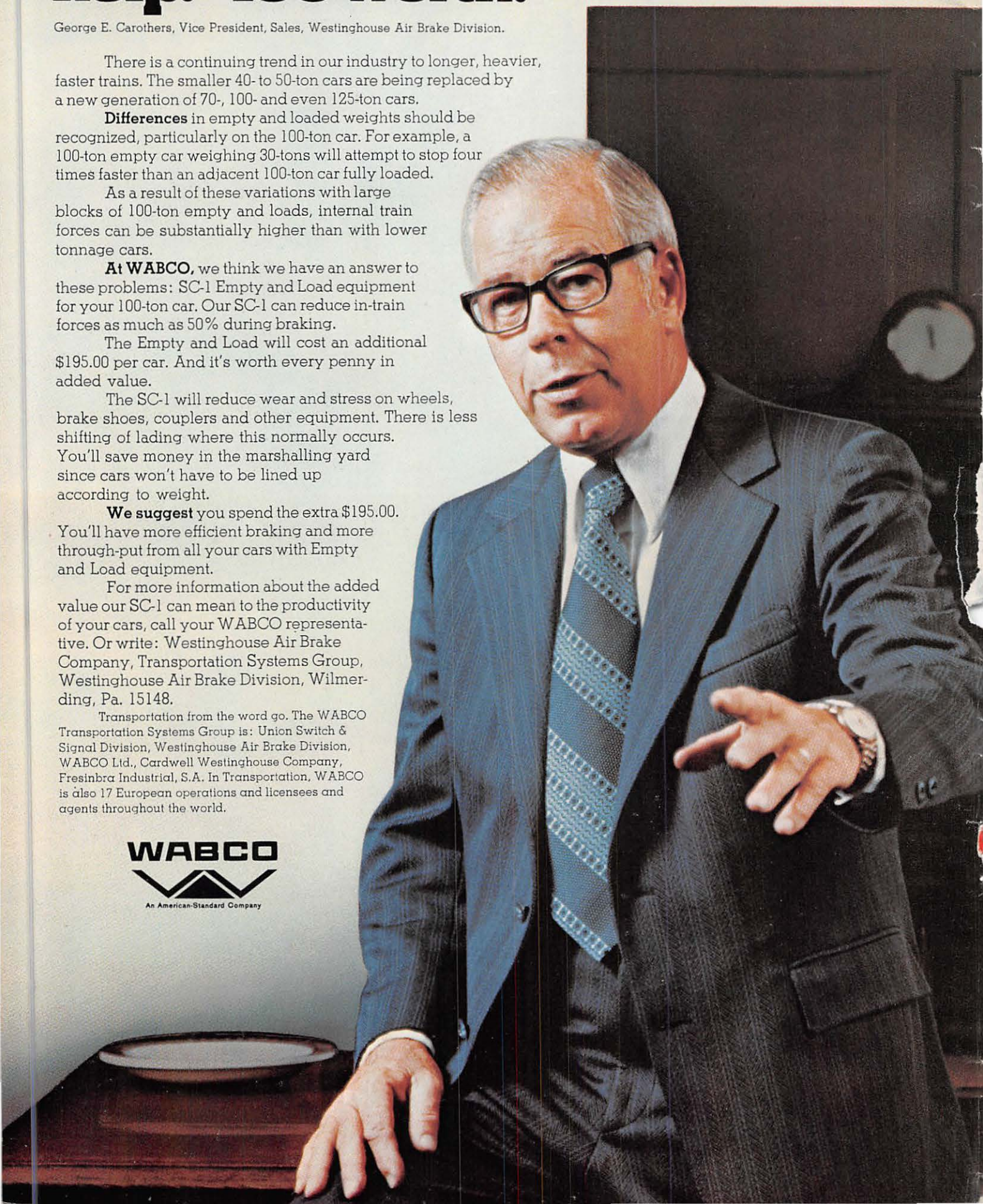

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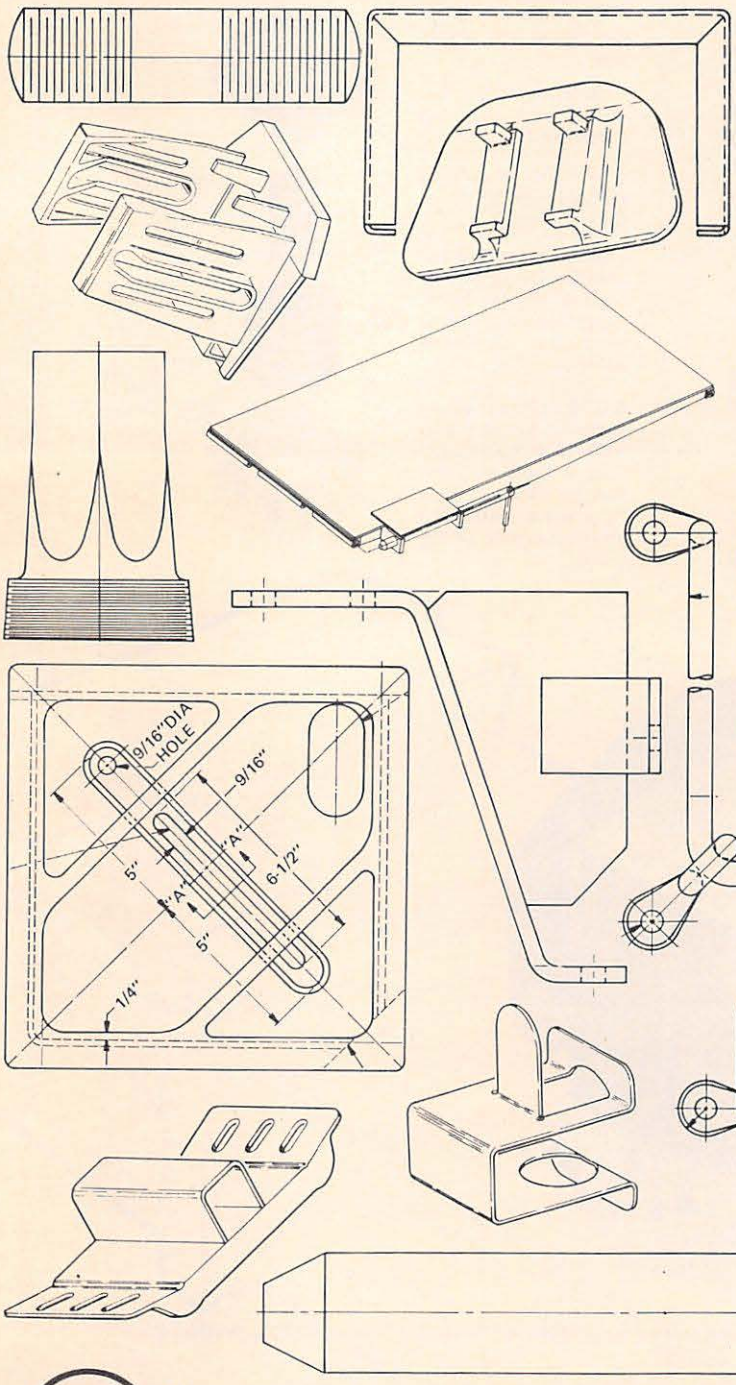

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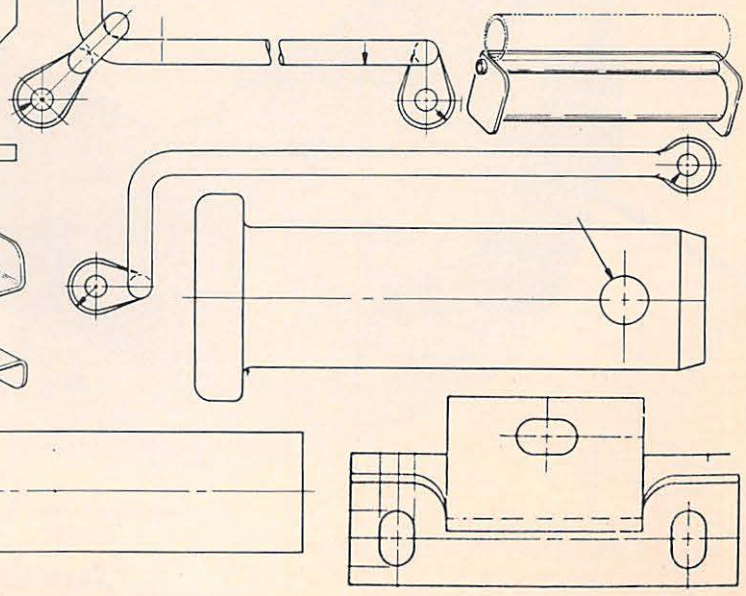

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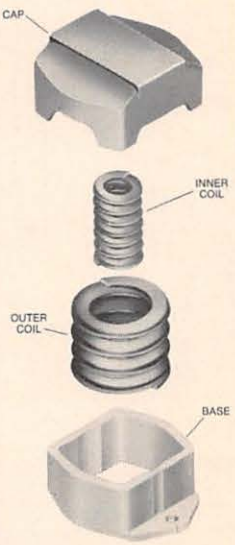

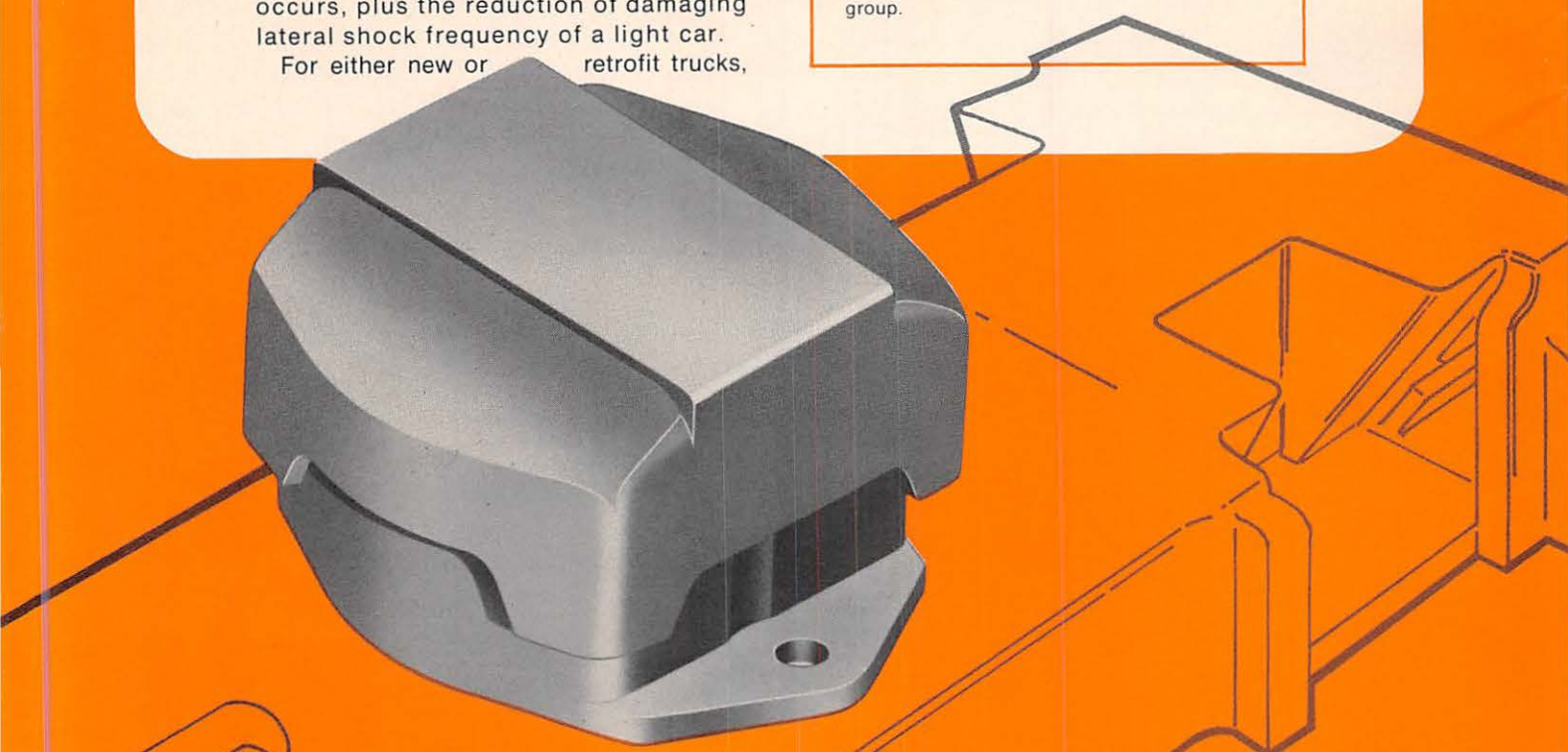

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Inside

LUTHER S. MILLER

AMTRAK AT THREE

In the main lobby of No. 955 L'Enfant Plaza, in Washington, D.C. a former aerospace headquarters, there is a bronze plaque which salutes the "dedicated men and women" who succeeded in getting a man to the moon on time. Today, No. 955 is called the Amtrak Building, and another band of dedicated men and women are trying, as one visitor recently observed, "to accomplish the demonstrably harder goal of trying to get passengers to Kansas City on time." Harder, perhaps, because Amtrak works with millions of dollars, not billions.

What isn't being done at Amtrak is regularly and enthusiastically explored in the popular periodical press. What *is* being done is the subject of Associate Editor Tom Kizzia's third anniversary report on Amtrak, which begins on p. 18.

Amtrak's management—in particular its president—has been under almost constant attack from one quarter or another since the corporation came into being. The most serious criticism within the industry has been that Roger Lewis may have adopted too much of an "adversary" attitude in his dealing with railroads. "Lawyers-talking-to-lawyers doesn't get you very far in this business," says one railroad man.

But criticism of Lewis has abated in recent months. Senator Vance Hartke (D.-Ind.) recently told Railway Age: "Roger Lewis has demonstrated to me that he is sincerely interested in modernizing the passenger service system."

A new Amtrak board is now being constituted—and Lewis was among the first six nominees for that board submitted to the Senate by the White House. The names of three more White House nominees were, early in May, still to go to the Senate before the advise-and-consent machinery began to move. When the new board is confirmed, its first order of business will probably be to name (or rename) a management slate.

Roger Lewis, who says that as a child he vowed never to work for a railroad (his father was a railroad passenger agent; Lewis made his own name in the airline and aerospace business before coming to Amtrak), is now a confirmed railroad man.

In all candor, he thinks he has done a good job under difficult conditions and he wants to keep it. Whether he does, or doesn't, even his harshest critics will find it hard to say that Amtrak has not come farther, and faster, under his stewardship than most people thought would be possible three years ago.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LEWIS K. SILLCOX

He would probably resent being called "the grand old man" of railroading. But grand he is—and a few days ago, April 30, he turned 88. We're referring, of course, to Lewis K. Sillcox. Here is a man who had illustrious careers in the railroad and railway supply industries (more than 30 years with New York Air Brake) before embarking upon the most active "retirement" of anyone we've ever known (with the possible occasional exception of John W. Barriger, now a comparative youngster of 73). Lewis Sillcox was the first recipient—26 years ago—of the prestigious Salzberg Medallion. And he is as he was described by the 1974 recipient, IC Industries Chairman and Chief Executive William B. Johnson: "He is a one-man education movement. . .He has contributed greatly to transportation, particularly with his dozens of papers on transport technology and economics."

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RAILWAY AGE

MAY 13, 1974

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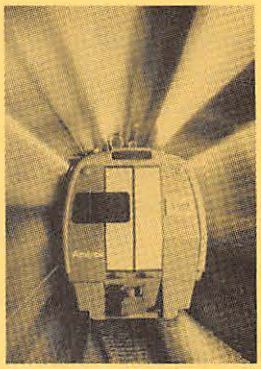

COVER

Ike Vern and Dick Wolters made the cover picture with the help of a 6-ft-long Metroliner model borrowed from Amtrak, and special camera techniques invented for the occasion.

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Short and Significant

FEC STRIKE LITIGATION: OVER AT LAST

It was more than 11 years ago that Florida East Coast's non-operating employees went on strike over a wage dispute. FEC went right on operating, and successfully. But the litigation began piling up, and it wasn't until a short time ago that the last of it was finally cleared away. To review, FEC and the non-ops reached a compromise agreement in March 1971 which ended the strike and provided for such things as wage increases, bulletining of jobs and settlement of claims for $1.5 million to be paid by FEC. These provisions have been carried out. But, the 1971 agreement was subject to a stipulation by the Federal government, as a plaintiff, that final approval would not come until arrangements were made to remedy effects of any past discrimination on the part of carrier and unions. This has now been resolved. And it is all over, finally, except for distribution of the claim fund.

QUARTER'S CAR ORDERS AT 28,491

The backlog of new freight equipment in car-builders' shops reached a 22-year high on April 1 after another record month of car orders raised the total of undelivered cars to 75,493. As April opened, the backlog in railroad shops was 4,232. After 10,345 new cars were ordered from commercial shops during March and 169 from railroad shops, the total for 1974's first quarter was 28,491. The comparable year-earlier figure was 20,720. Deliveries of new cars during March totalled 5,355.

ANOTHER BILLION FOR PULLMAN

It required more than 100 years for Pullman Incorporated to grow into a company with a consolidated order backlog of $1 billion, and it happened in May 1973. Last month, 11 months later, Pullman passed the $2-billion mark, with the help of first-quarter orders here and abroad totaling more than $800 million. At the same time, President Samuel B. Casey, Jr., was able to report a new-record high for first-quarter earnings—and the 12th quarter in a row in which earnings were higher than in the comparable year-earlier period.

NO MARRIAGE, AFTER ALL

Pullman Incorporated and Computer Identics, once parties to an agreement in principle contemplating a merger, reported last month than they had mutually agreed to end merger talks. No reason was given.

RAILS PLAN 29% HIKE IN SPENDING

Railroads are now planning to invest $2.53 billion in capital improvements in 1974, up 29% from 1973's actual $1.96 billion, according to a late survey by the McGraw-Hill Publications Co.'s Economics Department. In its spring capital spending survey, McGraw-Hill found that all U.S. business plans capital outlays totaling $119.1 billion this year. That would be a 19.4% increase over 1973. But there is some question as to whether the present projection will fully materialize. A year ago, business planners told McGraw-Hill they would increase capital spending by 19%; the actual increase was 13%.

EL, B&M RATED REORGANIZABLE

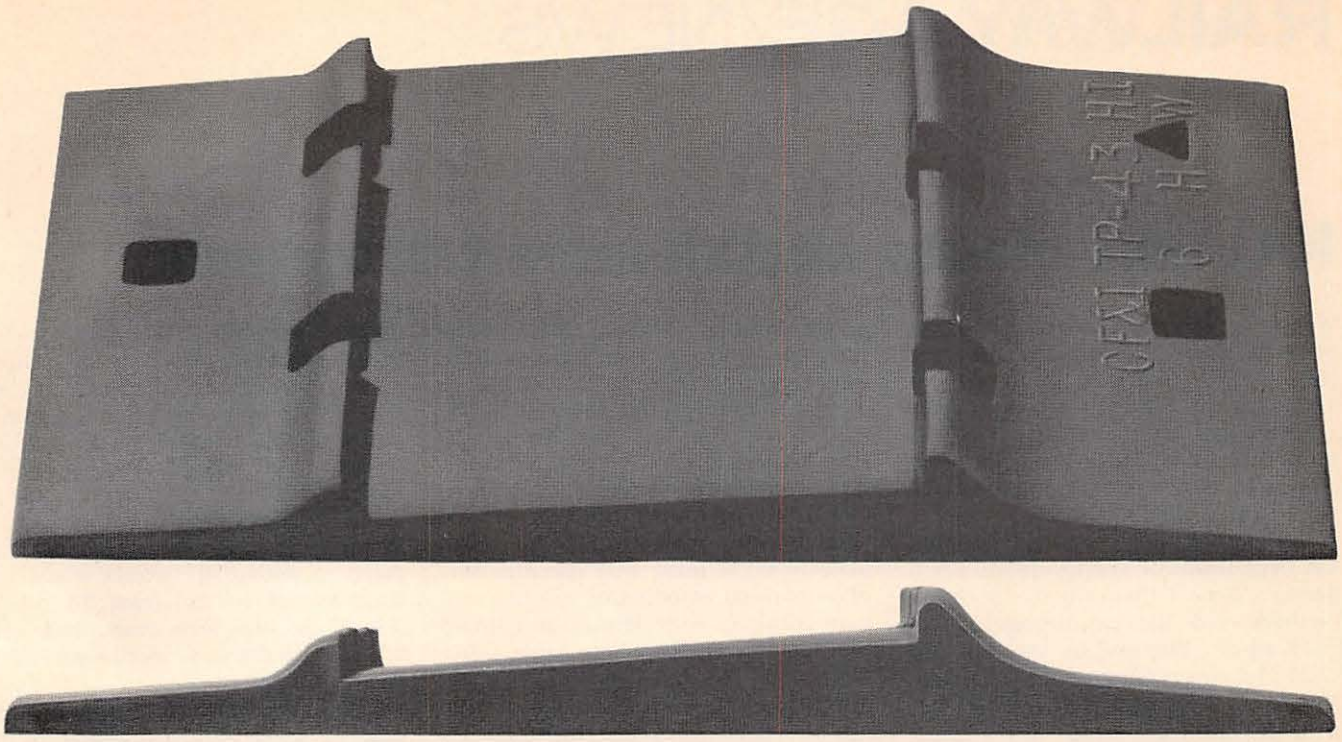
Erie Lackawanna and Boston & Maine have been ruled reorganizable on an income basis by U.S. District Courts and will not be entering Conrail. Four other northeastern bankrupts, including Penn Central, were rated as beyond normal reorganization by the judges overseeing their cases. This means that PC, Reading, Lehigh Valley and Jersey Central are all likely to be included in the Conrail "rationalization" and the Department of Transportation will have to revise its February preliminary system plan to exempt EL and B&M from direct involvement.

FROM UP, A $154-MILLION COMMITMENT

Add Union Pacific to the list of roads getting a jump on 1975 equipment deliveries. UP is placing orders totaling $154 million for 90 diesel-electric units and 4,250 freight cars—1,025 covered hopper cars, 1,000 open-top hopper cars, 1,400 box cars, 500 refrigerator cars, 125 flat cars, 100 wood-chip gondolas and 100 cabooses. UP President John C. Kenefick said the orders are being placed early to guarantee delivery in "an extremely tight" manufacturing market.

TAA VOICES FUEL-SUPPLY CONCERN

Worried that Administration policy may be "dangerously de-emphasizing" energy-conservation efforts—in response to pressures for greater gasoline supplies—the Transportation Association of America is urging the Federal Energy Office to keep its eye on the total picture. Said TAA President Paul J. Tierney in a letter to FEO, "The transportation industry is not quick to forget the very serious fuel problems that were encountered during the past winter, and cannot overlook the possibility that at some future time the Arabs may elect to re-institute some form of supply constraints. We believe it is essential that prompt steps be taken to build up ample stocks of middle-distillates now. . ."



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ICC unit blasts abandonment proposals

While the great compromise that was to solve the Northeast rail crisis—the Regional Rail Reorganization Act of 1973—has apparently been coming apart at the seams due to reluctance of the involved railroads to get involved, the bureaucratic process mandated by the Act has been grinding on.

Its latest product is a commentary on the Department of Transportation's *Rail Services Report* that criticizes both the methods and the conclusions of the DOT report. Prepared by the Rail Services Planning Office of the Interstate Commerce Commission and released at a news conference in the ICC's courtroom-like Hearing Room B, the commentary lashes out at the DOT report's recommendations for rail abandonment.

The Planning Office report, first in a series scheduled to appear prior to the October 29 release of a Preliminary System Plan, was released in compliance with a Congressional mandate calling for comment on the DOT report within 120 days of passage of the Reorganization Act. The Act became law on January 2. Because DOT had 30 days to prepare its report, the Rail Service Planning Office had only 90 days to analyze it, conduct a series of public hearings, and publish its own commentary.

As a result, the commentary is not as complete as it might be if Planning Office staffers had more time to analyze data. The introduction to the critique emphasizes that "it was not possible in the time allotted under the Act to review every decision in the DOT report respecting individual rail services. The record in this proceeding contains valuable, and in many instances, most specific, data concerning local rail operations. Time did not permit the recital and discussion in this report of all the information received. In particular, it should be noted that the discussion of the public participation which follows focuses largely upon the oral testimony taken at the hearings, and that the analysis of the written statements which have been received is still in a relatively early stage."

Nonetheless, what is in the critique amounts to a harsh judgment on the main theme of the DOT report. Pointing out that "a reader of the DOT report can only come away with the conviction that the Secretary has concluded that the basic cure for the problems of the railroads in the region is major surgery, in the form of excision," the critique challenges both the conclusion and the way it was reached.

It acknowledges that there are excess rail lines in the Northeast; but it asks whether pruning rail lines will really save a significant amount of money. "While the definitive analysis of this point has not yet been done, there are indications, at least, that abandonment of substantial amounts of rail line will have relatively little impact on railroad profitability compared to such other factors as the high cost of terminal operations in the Northeast, labor costs, and the debilitating and expensive effects of many years of deferred maintenance."

Even if large scale pruning is called for, the critique added, "it must be asked whether the process followed by the Secretary and described in the DOT report is an acceptable method for determining which lines should be incorporated into a new rail system. . .The Secretary was not called upon to make suggestions as to which yards and terminals, and other facilities, such as car and engine shops, should be included in the basic system. Nevertheless, the location of such facilities, and especially railroad yards, is an important factor in deciding which mainline routes can be operated most efficiently. . .The failure to take these factors into account constitutes a major flaw in the DOT report's approach to route selection."

Rail Services Planning Office questions wisdom of large-scale pruning of the Northeast plant.

It constitutes such a flaw, the Planning Office commentary continued, that it is questionable whether there would be enough lines remaining after applying the DOT criteria to form a viable rail system at all. Based on data drawn from two sources—the 1969 1% waybill sample and 1972 carload origination and termination data supplied by Class I railroads—the DOT sampling was described as too limited to be valid. "In short," the critique added, "the results of the DOT report do not encourage faith in any statistical method as a basic route selection guide."

Moreover, the Planning Office commentary said, the DOT report failed to take adequately into account environmental considerations encouraging the use of railroads; energy considerations raised by the changing nature of fuel resources; or national security requirements. "The DOT report did not include consideration of military requirements, with the result that lines indicated as potentially excess would preclude service to and from 20 installations if the lines were abandoned." The critique also cited a series of errors in the DOT report.

While the bulk of the 36-page critique is given over to a study of the DOT report and a summary of comments submitted on the report at public hearings, the core lies in a brief 11-point summary of principal Planning Office recommendations to the United States Railway Association. The recommendations urge the Association:

—To give full consideration to social goals enumerated in the Regional Rail Reorganization Act.

—To seek more complete traffic data from a wider variety of sources than DOT did.

—To consider lines as segments of a total system and evaluate their capabilities for contributing to over-all system efficiency, rather than requiring that each line or mile of track meet a test of independent profitability.

—To reject DOT's method of determining branch line viability, which was based primarily—if not solely—on the number of carloads handled.

—To scrutinize with great care the rail line capacity assumptions made by the Secretary.

—To give consideration to the selection of car building and car and engine repair facilities necessary to sustain the operations of the Corporation (Conrail).

—To reevaluate the Secretary's conclusions concerning competitive rail service.

—To accept and implement DOT's recommendation that rail facilities be used by more than one carrier wherever it is feasible and cost effective to do so.

—To consider passenger-carrying lines in three separate categories: long-haul intercity, intermediate distance high density intercity, and commuter.

—To consider the competitive impact of Conrail operations on surviving profitable railroads to make sure it does not affect those roads adversely. *(Continued)*

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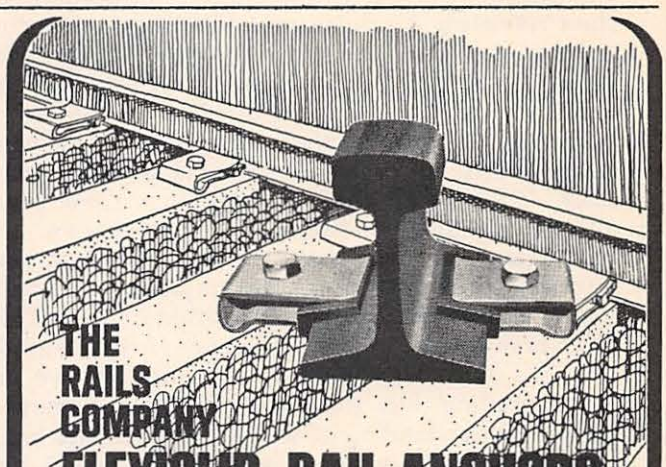

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Lines on Labor

GUS WELTY

NONE FOR THE ROAD

Accidents are unpleasant things to write about. Accidents involving man-failure are among the more unpleasant. Accidents involving man-failure due to the man's being under-the-influence are perhaps the most unpleasant. But, such accidents do happen, despite what railroads have long regarded as a tough and effective approach to problems surrounding Rule G. Now, it appears that the industry may have to get tougher—with the National Transportation Safety Board urging imposition of Federal regulations providing for airline-type pre-duty no-drinking periods. NTSB's proposal was triggered by an incident in California in which a freight train, being operated "at excessive speed by an engineer under the influence of alcohol," ran through an approach caution signal and a stop signal and crashed into the rear of a standing freight at about 60 mph. The engineer and the head brakeman of the moving train died. As for the engineer, NTSB found that he had been drinking beer and was under the influence and had been without rest for at least 23 hours before the accident.

NTSB TO FRA: WRITE A NEW RULE

With the Federal Railroad Administration working on proposed standards for operating rules, NTSB wants FRA to come up with regulations "that will in effect prohibit the use of narcotics and intoxicants by exployees for a specified period prior to their reporting for duty and while they are on duty." As for the railroad involved in the California crash, Southern Pacific, NTSB noted that SP rules do in fact prohibit use of alcohol by employees subject to duty. But, the Board said, the procedures normally followed don't insure that an engineer or conductor will actually be in proper physical condition when he goes on duty. It suggested that SP strengthen these procedures. NTSB also recommended that SP train all new hires, including brakemen, so that they understand their responsibility to monitor performance of other employees and to take action if a situation warrants. In the California crash, NTSB said that the head brakeman, "although inexperienced," should have known that the train was speeding and should have instituted emergency braking. But, the Board conceded, "a new employee with limited understanding of train operation who has never used the emergency brake valve in actual operation is no match for an intoxicated engineer who is exceeding the speed limit."

NTSB TO FRA: HOW ABOUT 1973's RECOMMENDATIONS?

The SP investigation also apparently prompted NTSB to remind FRA of three recommendations made a year ago, in connection with a collision on Penn Central. Then, the Board urged FRA (along with AAR) to develop a fail-safe dead-man train-stop device and to require its installation, use and maintenance; to study environmental conditions that might distract crews or cause them to fall asleep, and to write any needed rules.

NTSB's comments make a certain amount of sense. After all, as the book says, "Safety is of the first importance in the discharge of duty." But there are already tough rules in existence on most properties. Maybe the key is the second general rule: "Obedience to the rules is essential to safety."

—To scrutinize carefully input to the Planning Office and to encourage public participation in the planning process through widespread distribution of the Preliminary and Final System Plans.

Although the comments made in the Planning Office critique treat the DOT report rather harshly, two mitigating circumstances must be kept in mind. In the first place, while the Planning Office did not have enough time under the Congressional schedule to adequately analyze all data relevant to the report, DOT had even less time to draw it up. And while a number of the Planning Office criticisms would be valid no matter how long DOT spent writing the report, others stem directly from the limitations imposed on the Department of Transportation's research by the calendar.

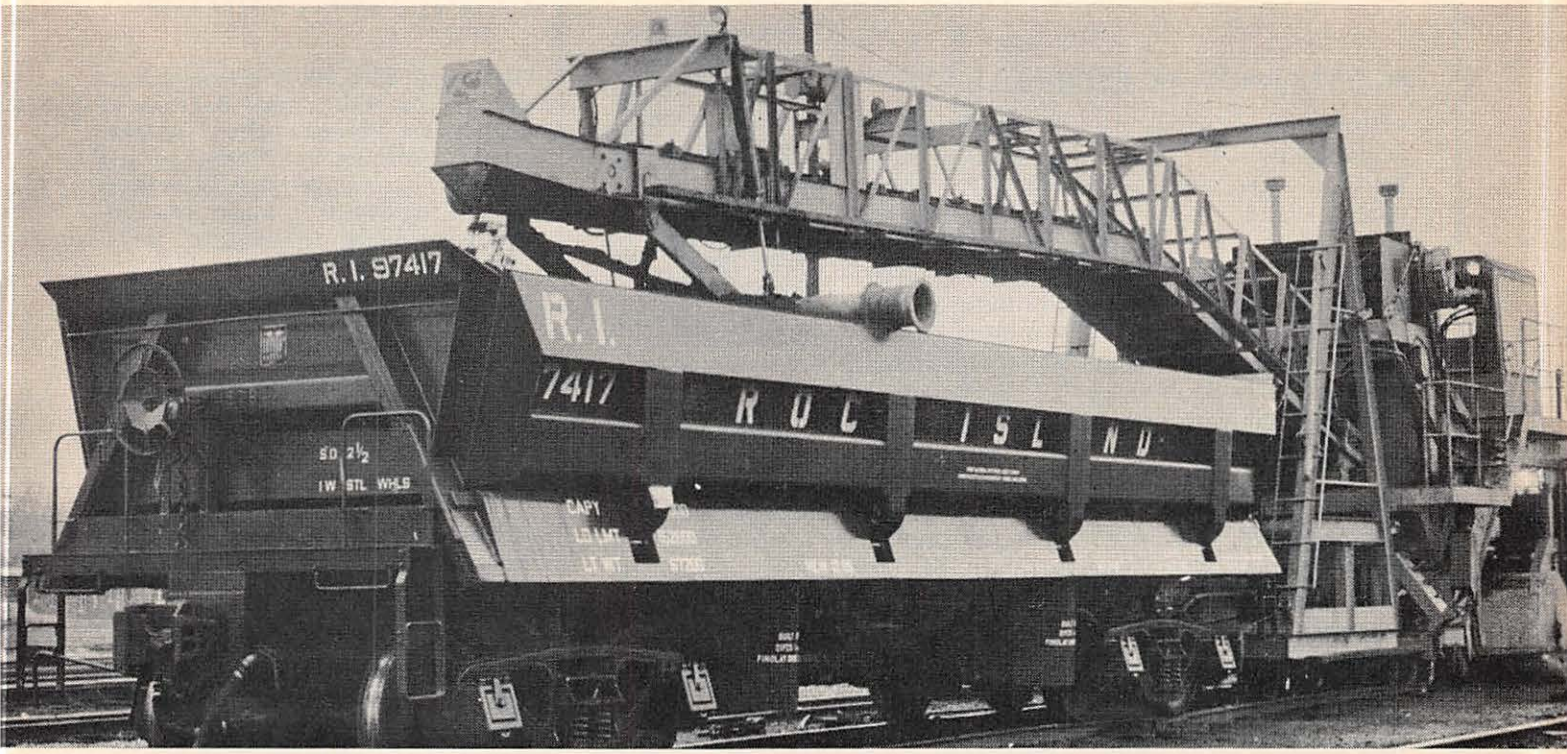
A more subtle influence on the critique is the rivalry between DOT and the ICC over who is really carrying the ball in the railroad reorganization game. Different concepts of how railroads should be run influence policymakers in both DOT and the Commission. For example, Planning Office Director George M. Chandler, speaking at the press conference called to unveil the critique, urged that more railroaders be involved in DOT formulation of railroad policy. The comment reflects a growing distrust of the role played by management specialists, often drawn from the White House or the Office of Management and Budget, who are given policy-making authority in areas where they lack technical expertise.

Southern: Ridership up, but so are costs

Southern Railway, largest of the non-Amtrak intercity passenger train operators, has experienced a 57% increase in revenue passenger miles in the first quarter of 1974, compared with 1973. In the wake of increased volume and a fare increase in November 1973 (and another 15% is currently being sought), passenger revenues rose from $801,000 in the first quarter of 1973 to $1,556,000 in the first three months of 1974, up a whopping 97%. But, says President W. Graham Claytor, Jr.: "Costs are up almost as much as revenues and increased volume has not wiped out the passenger deficit." The avoidable loss was $1.5 million in the first quarter of 1973 and $1.1 million this year.

Since Southern got its fare increase late last year, diesel fuel has increased by 11 cents per gallon, or by some $737,000 per year on the fuel used just in passenger operations. The 4% wage increase, effective Jan. 1, 1974, increases costs by another $120,000.

SPEED YARD CLEANING



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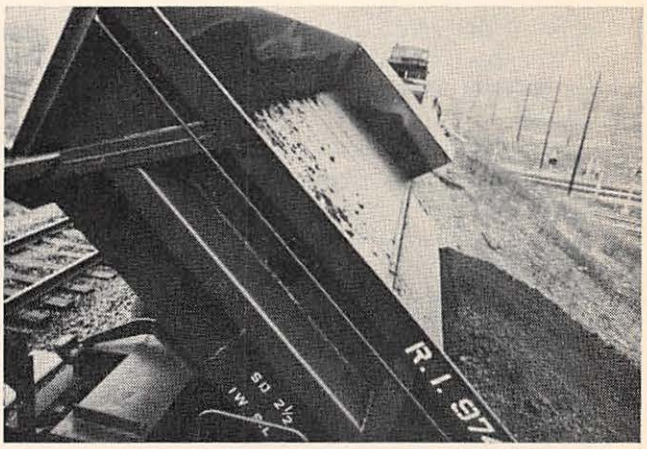

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Watching Washington

R.M.M. McCONNELL

PC GETS ANOTHER FEDERAL LIFT

Another in a series of Federal financial transfusions to the Penn Central got launched here when Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar announced an "agreement in principle" with the PC's trustees to make available up to $18 million to keep the railroad running during a spring cash shortage. The money comes from an $85-million pool of Federal funds authorized by Section 213 of the Regional Rail Reorganizational Act of 1973 to keep financially ailing railroads in operation until they can be reorganized.

Announcement of the new money was made in a brief and conventional DOT press release. The one-page release was supplemented, however, by an informal press conference with John Barnum, the Undersecretary of Transportation and the DOT man most vocally involved with the state of the nation's railroads.

Barnum's comments at the press briefing revealed the delicacy of the balancing act DOT has been carrying on with the public and the railroads. On the one hand, Barnum made it clear that he had great faith in the future of the railroads—in this case, especially the Penn Central—and was glad to help the PC through its financial rough spots. But he went on to acknowledge that both the faith and the money were aimed at encouraging shippers now using the Penn Central to stick with the railroad and not look for another way to move their goods. Barnum reported that some shippers seemed to feel that the PC was on the verge of grinding to a halt. It is important, he added to emphasize that this is not the case if the road is to maintain its present revenue level. So much for the shippers and the public.

On the other hand, Barnum made it equally clear that both the faith and the money are running low. While he took pains to avoid specific criticism of any aspect of the Penn Central's operations, he left the clear impression that he was not happy with the way the road's trustees were doing their job. And he raised several questions about the way things were being done on the Penn Central, wondering aloud if they couldn't be done better. With Federal Railroad Administrator John Ingram, Barnum also explained that the PC was going to have to present serious plans for track abandonment if it wanted any more money from the government.

BUT—WHERE IS THAT $85 MILLION?

Finally, and perhaps most ominously for the railroads and for the DOT balancing act, Barnum pointed out that the $85 million authorized under the Reorganization Act's Section 213 really doesn't exist. So far, Congress has only appropriated $35 million of the total authorized, and seems in no hurry to come up with the other $50 million. And of course, grants already made to the Penn Central and pending to other railroads in the Northeast—the Lehigh Valley has asked for $10 million and the Central of New Jersey has requested $4 million—leave little left of the $35 million that was appropriated.

The implication is clear that DOT cannot continue its balancing act much longer, and that when it falls, it will probably land heavily on the Penn Central.

FRA to get British research results

A two-year, $500,000 DOT contract has been signed with British Railways to provide the Federal Railroad Administration with results of existing and projected technical research. Eight years ago BR instituted a major research, development and test program which has been expanded since.

Areas to be covered in the exchange with FRA will include track dynamics, track roughness measurements, degradation of ballasted track, concrete roadbeds, track machine performance, lateral stability of track and rail vehicles, and data on performance of high-speed freight cars.

At the contract signing, attended by Transportation Secretary Claude S. Brinegar and British Railways Chairman Richard Marsh, Brinegar noted that the objective of the $500,000 program would be to avoid duplicative work. "We have carefully studied the complete spectrum of BR work," said Brinegar, "identifying that portion which is both unique and of particular value to DOT. The areas of track design and train dynamics have been identified as being fields where BR is ahead of U.S. and other countries.

"There is similar work in Japan and France which is of interest to us, and some details may overlap. However, there are differences of emphasis, variations in success and distinct differences in developmental areas that make it worth our while to gain further knowledge from the sophisticated research being conducted by the British."

Chairman Marsh is heading a British Rail technical marketing mission which has been touring the U.S. to promote licensing of rail technology. The group has completed a circuit around the nation, meeting with congressmen, government agencies and American manufacturers involved in production of rail equipment and components. The party toured the DOT High Speed Ground Test Center at Pueblo, Col.

Accompanying Marsh were Dr. Sydney Jones, head of engineering and research for British Railways; Graham Calder, chief electrical and mechanical engineer; and Alan Wickens, director of research laboratories.

Among British developments which are being discussed with U.S. interests are Britain's Advanced Passenger Train (APT) which, with either electric or turbine power, is to be capable of 155 mph on conventional track, and the diesel-powered High-Speed Train (HST) that is to go into service late next year. APT is not expected to be operational until almost 1980, although an experimental unit has already operated.

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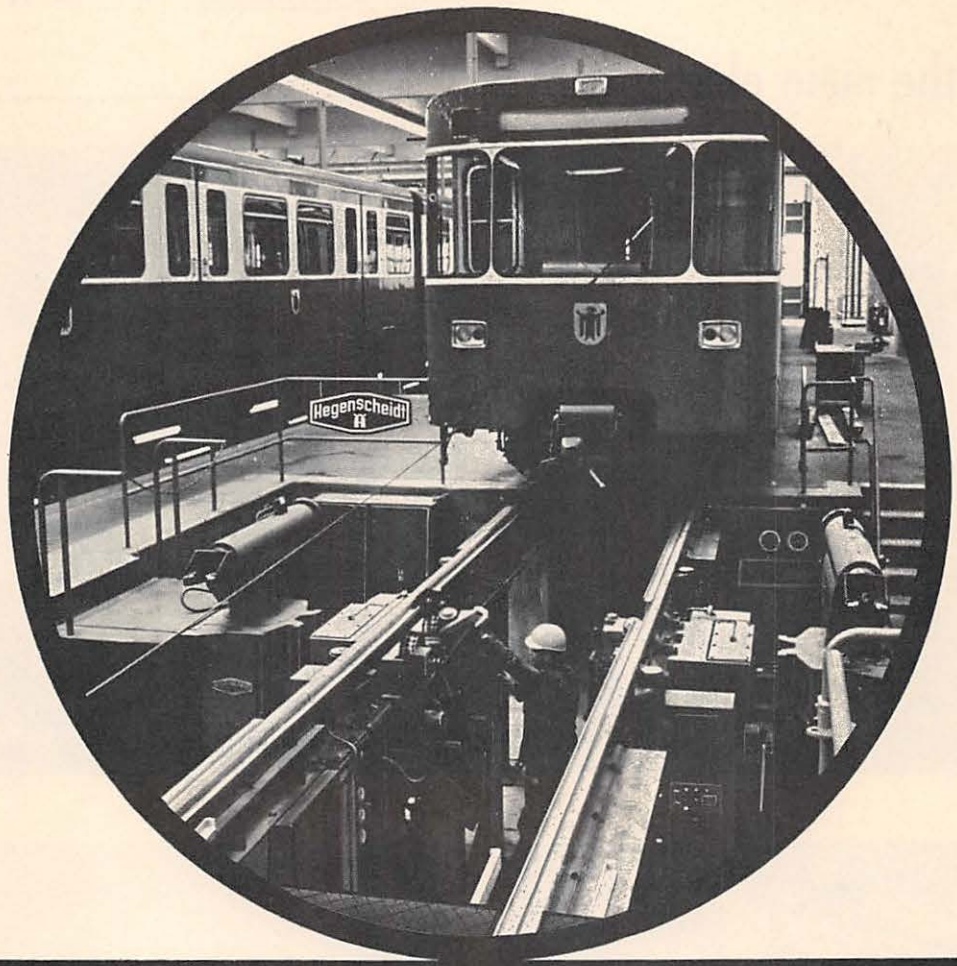

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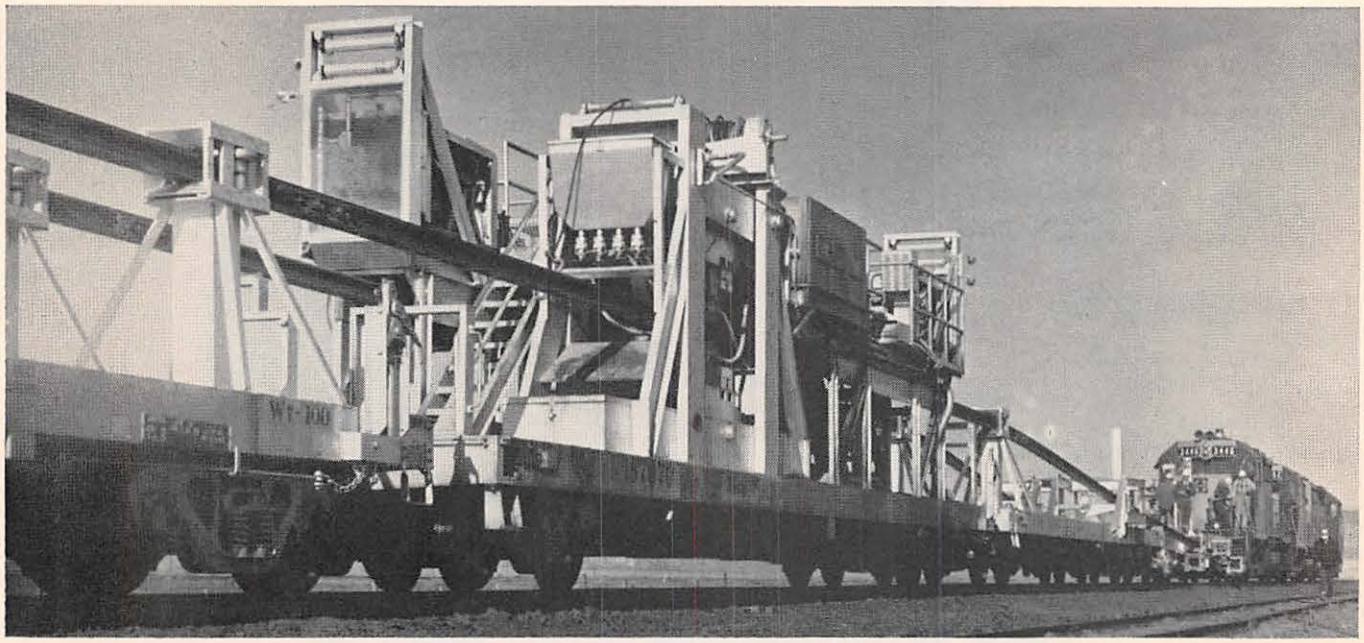
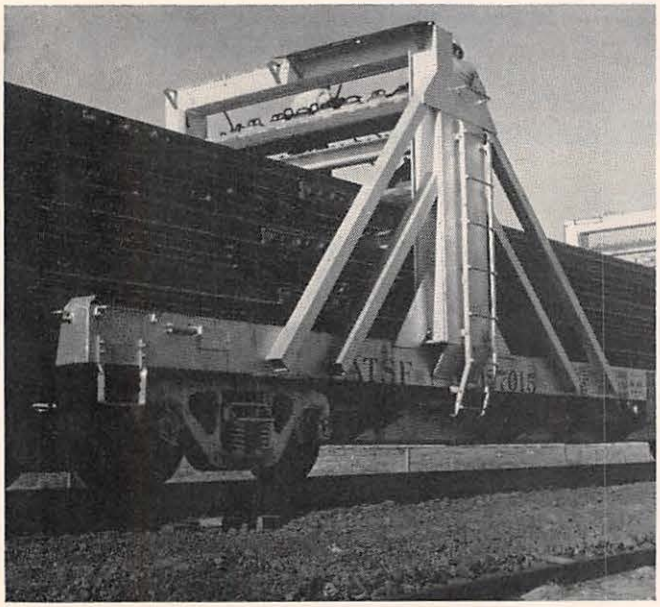
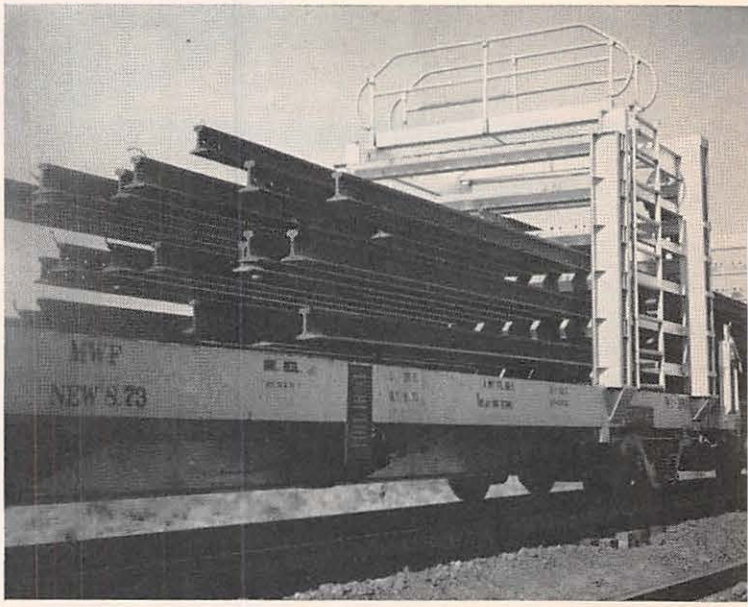




Tie-down car—roller-rack cars

Rails in the rack cars are secured against longitudinal movement by special fastenings on the tie-down car shown here. The roller racks on the rail cars are designed to accommodate jointed rail. The racks have a capacity of 54 rail strings (6 layers with 9 rails in each layer).



End cars

At each end of the rail train there is a car with a special rack like this, which supports the ends of the rail strings but allows lateral movement to take place when moving around curves. Not shown is a cross member that can be raised and lowered manually to guide the rails during unloading.

DISMANTLING JOINTED RAIL STRINGS

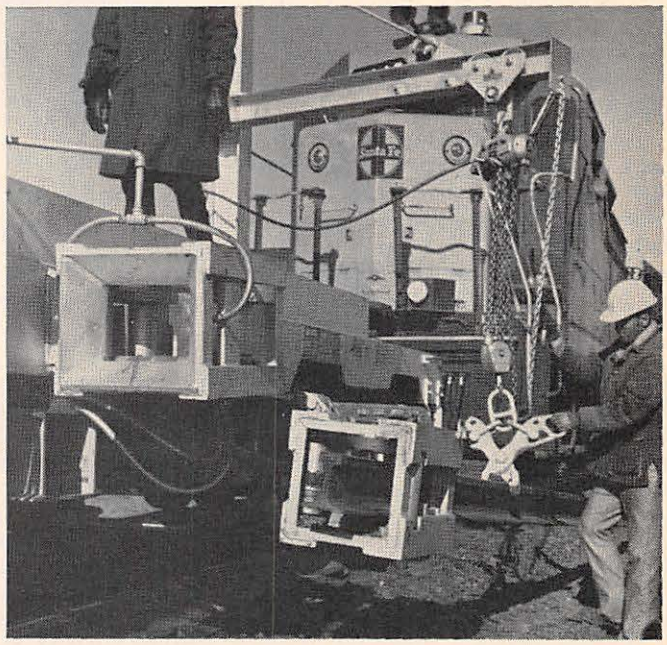
displaced rail available for butt-welding

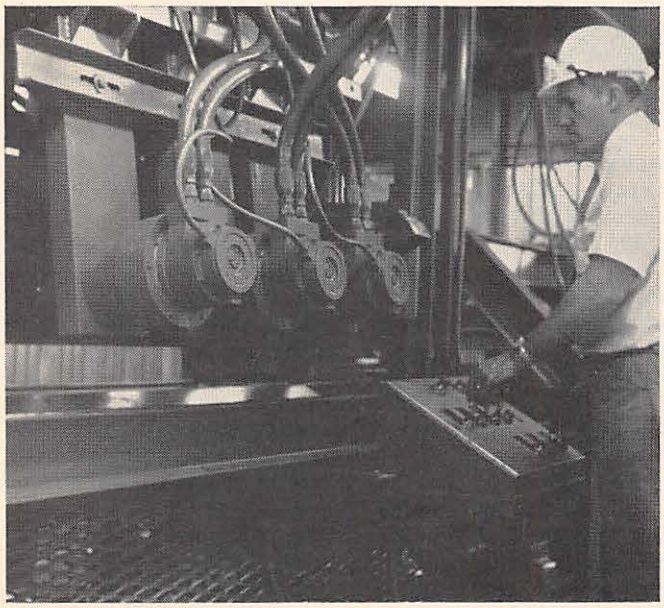
Pick-up unit and adjacent ramp cars

The Davidson-Kennedy pick-up unit offers power and flexibility when loading long jointed or welded strings of rail onto roller-rack cars. The unit can load two strings simultaneously at the rate of 120 feet per minute. Also the pushers have the advantage of reversibility if this becomes necessary when joining two strings. Adjustable ramps on adjacent cars expedite guidance of the long strings not only through the machines but also into slots in the rack cars.

Threader car

Function of this car is to guide and support the long strings on their way to and through the pusher car. A key feature is a rotatable threader box shown in use here. This feature allows the threader to be rotated to accommodate a rail lying on its side. The threader can then be rotated until the rail is in the upright position for loading. Handling of the rail end into the threader is assisted by an air hoist hung from a jib crane on the threader car.





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Circle 23 on Reader Service Card

Look what's happening to Amtrak

By TOM KIZZIA, Associate Editor

In a few short months, the notions of energy conservation and the importance of a rail passenger option have sunk deep into the American consciousness. "I wake up at night in my home," said one columnist recently, "and feel guilty that I am not on a train." No advertising jingle could have penetrated so deep. The ironic fact is that Amtrak's own efforts at reviving passenger service have been upstaged by something over which it had no control: The Great Fuel Panic of '73-'74.

As a result, what had been a trickle back to the tracks became a tidal wave, and Amtrak, though delighted, simply wasn't ready for such premature success. "The future arrived ahead of schedule," said one rail partisan, who couldn't help adding, "unlike most of Amtrak's trains."

To handle the increase, the historically undernourished passenger train business finds itself with the promise of hundreds of millions of dollars of new capital, though no one is certain yet just how much. By the most conservative estimates, however, half a billion dollars will be invested in new rolling stock over the next five years, and that much again will go into roadway and related improvements over a perhaps longer period.

Just last year, Amtrak drew up a long-range program calling for acquisition of 1,155 new cars, of which 535 would be for net expansion of the fleet, and 620 would replace cars to be retired from the present fleet of 2,030. As recently as January, Amtrak was still thinking in terms of ordering only about 100 to 200 of these cars during the current year. But the continuing surge of business back to the rails caused a drastic acceleration of the equipment program, and early in May Amtrak was completing negotiations with carbuilders for orders calling for around 200 single-level cars for short-haul service plus 100 turbine powered cars (20 trainsets) for corridor service. Early in the summer, an additional order will be placed for 100 or more bilevel coaches, similar to the bilevels that Budd built for the Santa Fe nearly 20 years ago; Louis Klauder & Associates is now drawing up detailed specifications. Twenty-five additional diesel-electrics complete the new package. (This is on top of earlier orders for 150 diesels which Electro-Motive is now rushing on-line, and 26 electrics which are being built by General Electric. Work is also under way, at Budd, on 57 Metroliner-type, locomotive-hauled cars.)

Trains may be crowded, late, or broken, but the people keep coming out—as they did March 6 for the opening of Amtrak's new San Joaquin Valley route in California.

For Amtrak, as for freight railroads, roadway is another and more difficult problem—but in the region where improvements are needed most, help is also on the way. In approving the Northeast Rail Reorganization Act, Congress mandated that Amtrak take over, through lease or purchase, the Corridor passenger lines between Washington and Boston, and ordered the Department of Transportation to proceed immediately with massive improvements to these lines. Right now, Amtrak, DOT and the United States Railway Association are trying to figure out just how much money is available, and how and where and when it will be spent (see below).

There are other reasons for the optimism that now pervades Amtrak's busy, modern headquarters building in Washington—a principal one being a new compensation/service contract negotiated with Penn Central which promises, through its incentive/penalty provisions, some degree of relief for Amtrak's biggest operating headache: poor on-time performance.

Meanwhile, fears of a year ago that Amtrak was hell-bent on further contraction of its routes have proved to be baseless. Amtrak recently opened up two new routes (Oakland-Bakersfield in California and St. Louis-Dallas), and this summer will offer a brand-new service—an auto-ferry operation between Indianapolis and Poinciana, Fla.

There's one thing the energy crisis hasn't helped: Soaring costs, especially for diesel fuel, have added $20 million to Amtrak's estimated operating deficit for fiscal 1974, despite increased revenues.

A year ago, Amtrak President Roger Lewis told Railway Age, "We can carry an enormous increase in traffic without increasing costs" (RA, May 13, 1973, p. 35). Amtrak put together a big advertising push to bring out the riders, peppering the papers with such wishful slogans as "We're making the rails worth riding again," and "Tracks are back." At that time, Harold Graham, Amtrak's vice president for marketing, was hoping for an increase of 15% in ridership.

"Enormous" is precisely the word for what, in fact, happened. The increase for 1974's first quarter, over the similar 1973 period, was 41%, with some of the most spectacular gains registered on long-haul routes: New York-Florida, 80%; Chicago-Oakland, 78%; Los Angeles-Seattle, 74%; Chicago-New Orleans, 58%; Chicago-Florida, 52%. In the Northeast, New York-Washington patronage was up 24% from already-high levels, and New York-Boston was up 61%.

Graham figures the maximum feasible load factor on a long haul is probably not more than 70%. Amtrak's current load factor averages out at about 42%, but during peak periods, when most of the new riders have climbed aboard, the cars are packed.

The rate of increase will level off during this summer's peak, because most trains last summer were running at or near capacity. But even allowing for that, DOT Secretary Claude S. Brinegar (no avid partisan of the rail passenger mode) is predicting an average increase of 25% in riders for calendar 1974, and that will be on top of an increase of similar magnitude registered last year. Clearly, tracks *are* back, and despite the continuing attacks of such Amtrak critics as Anthony Haswell, president of the 5,000-member National Association of Railroad Passengers, millions of Americans feel that, all things being relative, the rails are worth riding again. Where once Lewis was concerned with getting the public to think rail, now he says, "Our constraint is not going to be so much rider attitudes as it's going to be our ability to handle the increase in traffic."

When the equipment Amtrak is ordering finally arrives, will the riders still be there? Or will their sudden taste of train travel leave a bad aftertaste? Graham, who has had the job of keeping the riders happy, says, "The very high percentage of passengers are very understanding about the problems we are facing because of the loads brought about by the energy crisis."

Though some attrition back to auto-

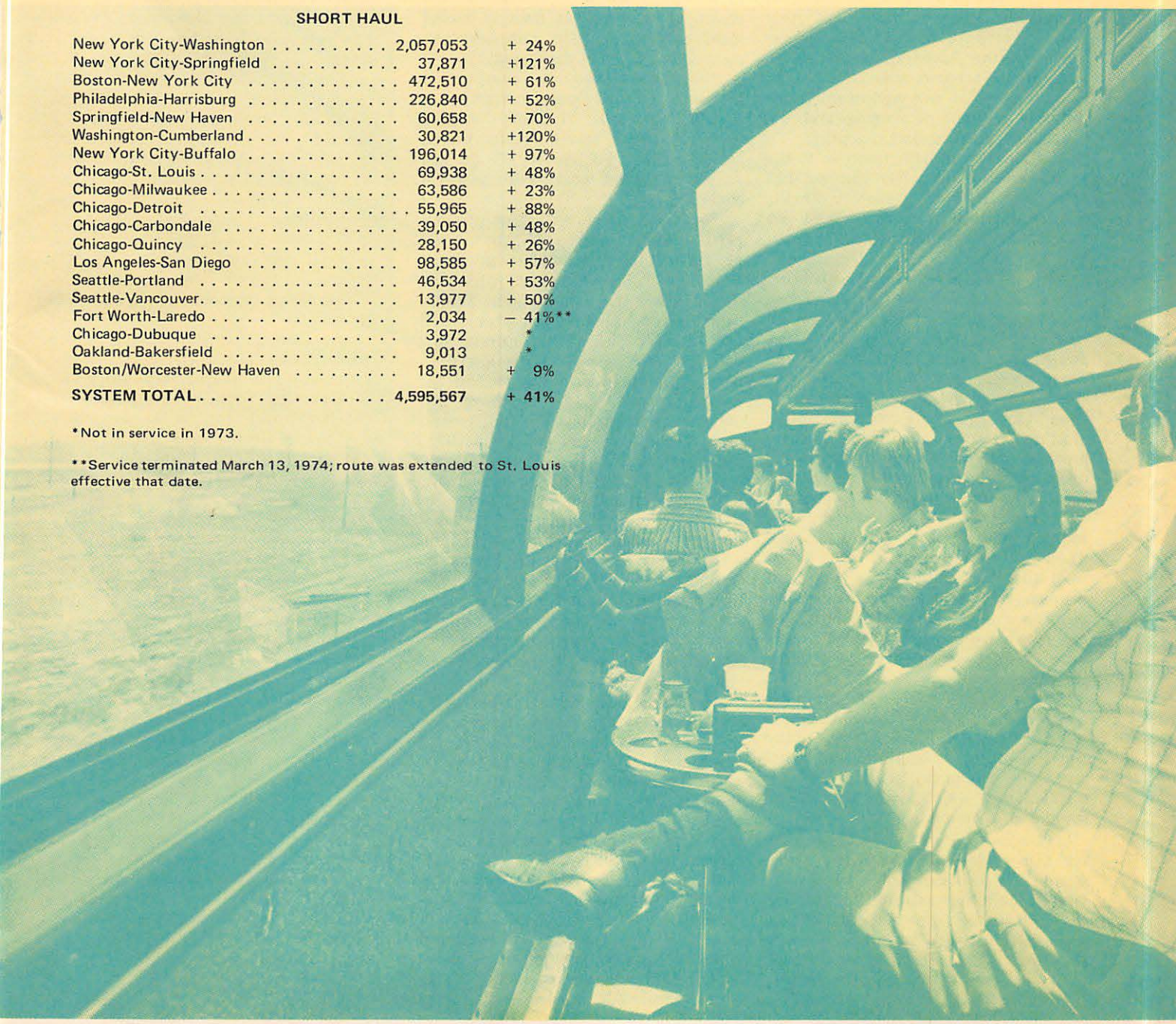
ANY WAY YOU FIGURE IT, THE WORD IS "GROWTH"

ROUTE	Passengers Carried 1st Quarter 1974	% Change From 1973
New York City-Florida	268,567	+ 80%
New York City-Washington-Chicago	72,197	+ 46%
New York City-Washington-Kansas City	56,296	+ 26%
Chicago-Florida	39,749	+ 52%
Chicago-New Orleans	53,400	+ 58%
Chicago-Los Angeles	71,543	+ 29%
Chicago-Oakland	78,084	+ 78%
Chicago-Minot-Seattle	100,101	+ 46%
Chicago-Wenatchee-Seattle	59,301	+ 43%
Chicago-Houston	67,874	+ 34%
New Orleans-Los Angeles	28,015	+ 52%
Washington-Newport News-Chicago	28,110	+ 27%
Washington-Montreal	47,827	+ 74%
Los Angeles-Seattle	89,831	+ 74%
St. Louis-Laredo	3,550	*
SHORT HAUL		
New York City-Washington	2,057,053	+ 24%
New York City-Springfield	37,871	+121%
Boston-New York City	472,510	+ 61%
Philadelphia-Harrisburg	226,840	+ 52%
Springfield-New Haven	60,658	+ 70%
Washington-Cumberland	30,821	+120%
New York City-Buffalo	196,014	+ 97%
Chicago-St. Louis	69,938	+ 48%
Chicago-Milwaukee	63,586	+ 23%
Chicago-Detroit	55,965	+ 88%
Chicago-Carbondale	39,050	+ 48%
Chicago-Quincy	28,150	+ 26%
Los Angeles-San Diego	98,585	+ 57%
Seattle-Portland	46,534	+ 53%
Seattle-Vancouver	13,977	+ 50%
Fort Worth-Laredo	2,034	– 41%**
Chicago-Dubuque	3,972	*
Oakland-Bakersfield	9,013	*
Boston/Worcester-New Haven	18,551	+ 9%
SYSTEM TOTAL	4,595,567	+ 41%

*Not in service in 1973.

**Service terminated March 13, 1974; route was extended to St. Louis effective that date.

	Passenger Miles	Revenues
May–June 1971	451,644,497	$24,242,382
July–Sept. 1971	863,258,193	$39,568,521
Oct.–Dec. 1971	678,542,441	$36,270,015
Jan.–March 1972	646,283,683	$36,189,277
April–June 1972	724,522,892	$38,240,831
July–Sept. 1972	923,875,587	$48,080,789
Oct.–Dec. 1972	743,921,330	$40,065,099
Jan.–March 1973	705,132,865	$44,013,389
April–June 1973	855,555,023	$45,143,281
July–Sept. 1973	1,186,253,937	$61,690,822
Oct.–Dec. 1973	1,059,568,799	$51,432,672
Jan.–March 1974	NA	$61,415,694



mobiles is already apparent, Amtrak doesn't expect things ever to go back to the way they once were, when just arresting the downward procession of ridership was big news.

Airline fares are going up, Graham points out, with discounts being removed from the young and the aged, and from families and the military: he sees all of these as likely railroad passengers. Young people in particular seem to have discovered passenger trains. Improved service, the chief dividend of the present investment, will attract new riders. Importantly, the cost of fuel for automobile trips is going to be higher from now on.

EQUIPMENT: OLD AND NEW

As Roger Lewis suggests, there has been a decided shift of emphasis at Amtrak headquarters in the last year: from an attempt to sell rail passenger service to the American public, to an attempt to accommodate them. Amtrak's orders for new equipment is one response to this. Enlarging and improving the existing fleet is another.

Amtrak's immediate response to the energy crisis was to buy the last 125 serviceable coaches available on the North American continent. These are now being refurbished at a cost of about $70,000 each.

"When I came here three years ago," Lewis recalls, "planners were estimating we'd need 1,067 cars. After an inventory of all that were available, we bought the best 1,100 to 1,200 and leased others. [Santa Fe, which provided 440 cars, was the biggest source. Penn Central, where Amtrak found most of its recent acquisition, initially provided only 65] Now our car fleet is up past 2,000, including leased cars. But they have an average age of 25 years.

"We ought to be through the first round of heavy overhauls by this fall. There are some 100 to 125 cars a year we'd like to replace rather than put through another heavy overhaul. Obviously, we've got some flexibility; you can plan on replacement, but if you've got a market demand you keep those cars going."

In the next round of overhauls Amtrak will be introducing standardized parts. Says Lewis: "This will give us the freedom to move cars around the country from season to season, and for maintenance we'll have standardized supplies of spare parts."

In the new-car orders, the emphasis is on higher density—i.e., more salable space. The new cars will have slightly less leg room than existing ones (though they will still be far roomier than the air or bus alternatives). Amtrak is currently adding 10 seats to each of 70 old cars.

Lewis describes the balance Amtrak wants to strike as "the greatest good for the greatest number. People may have to put up with slightly crowded conditions, because our responsibility as a public carrier is to take people where they want to go."

Graham emphasizes that this doesn't mean the train will ever be as tightly packed as its competition: "We know that the great attractiveness of train travel is being able to get up and move around, and we don't want to destroy the salable features of our products. But you can go further than we have now. Today, the Metroliner coach has more space between seats than first class air. What we've got to do is make each car do as much as it can."

Lewis, who often recalls that in his early days at Amtrak he rarely saw an equipment supplier (he was, after all, widely thought to have been brought in to preside over the liquidation of rail passenger service), has been in recent months huddling with carbuilders almost daily. He is not displeased.

"I'd like to see as much competition between old and new companies as possible," he says. "I think that way we'll get better service, better prices, better quality. I'd like to get the old American system working for us for a change."

That "old American" spirit of competition has not only excited the interest of such domestic builders as Budd, Rohr and Pullman-Standard, it has also spread across the Atlantic. The French won a strong toehold last year, when ANF-Frangeco leased to Amtrak, with option to buy, two turbo trainsets. In test service between Chicago and St. Louis since last Oct. 1, they proved not only to be crowd-pleasers, but racked up a reliability record of 98% in 1973, and a perfect 100% this spring. Any new orders for French-designed equipment, Lewis has emphasized, would be largely built by the ANF-Frangeco U.S. licensee, Rohr. This did not, however, prevent United Aircraft—which has an investment of around $30 million in the turbos which it built for test service in the U.S. and Canada—from waging a determined "buy America" campaign in its efforts to sell Turbotrain II to Amtrak in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, the British continue to cast a longing eye at the Amtrak dollar—and in April and May British Rail Chairman Richard Marsh and a team of technicians and marketing men were in the U.S. trying to interest Amtrak and potential U.S. licensees in Britain's now-tested-and-ready diesel-hauled HST (high speed train) and in BR's APT (advanced passenger train) which is still under development. Aware of buy-America pressures, Marsh told Railway Age: "I think it would be unrealistic to expect a country as large and advanced as the United States to be willing to accept imported vehicles over a long

Montrealer: It's

The train that is called the Montrealer when it travels north was, until recently, called the Washingtonian on its southward journey. Now it is the Montrealer whether it is going to or from Montreal, as it should be, since that city is its raison d'etre.

The ski slopes along the way have also helped give the train its unusual character. Amtrak's brochures say the scenery is beautiful once you get north of Springfield, Mass.; and if ever Amtrak adds a daytime run, that will surely be a third reason to make the trip. As it is, the night reflects one's attention back into the train itself, reinforcing Amtrak's professed goal of making the ride itself an event. The Montrealer is a train to which Amtrak can point to prove it is trying.

The train came along as an afterthought, a year and a half after Amtrak came into being. Delaware & Hudson had taken the opportunity to relinquish its passenger service. Meanwhile, there was no train to Montreal at all. Prompted by Congress in June 1972 to go international, Amtrak restored the link but shifted it east, up through New England on Penn Central, Boston & Maine, and Central Vermont track.

One reason was that the D&H route would have come into New York City at Grand Central Station, while Amtrak's route hooked up with other corridor trains at Penn Station. The old route, through New York State, was relatively short and fast, but to the east there were more towns, and Congressional districts, and mountains to attract skiers. The people in Vermont were so happy when they got a passenger train—it had been five years—that they stayed up on opening night (Sept. 29, 1972), with brass bands blaring in the dark, and they turned out in subsequent weeks, with paint brushes, to restore seven stations along the route.

The Montrealer has young hosts and hostesses, who fetch pillows and pretend to adjust your car's climate control. There is a real dining car, with fresh carnations (red and white in a blue vase), table cloths, waiters, and food that is better than an airplane's. A roast beef dinner costs only $3.75, and it seems especially easy for passengers making the long overnight haul to meet and talk. Doing something on a train, besides just sitting there, is enough of an extraordinary event for most people to bring out that in-it-together camaraderie Americans usually reserve for times of especially good or bad fortune, for cruise ships or floods.

proof that Amtrak is in there trying

It is Le Pub, the Montrealer's orange-and-purple bar car, that is the crux of Amtrak's claim to making the train itself an event worth attending. There are tables and lounge chairs, and a waitress. There is an upright piano at the opposite end from the bar, and on weekend runs there is an upright-piano player as well; on weeknights, revelers depend for their entertainment on the inspiration and bravura of their fellow passengers. The Montrealer was the first Amtrak train to offer live entertainment. On some trips there is still a jazzy Muzak which runs along the ceiling of conversation and train-rattle, dripping down when the train stops. The atmosphere of Le Pub can be so absorbing that it is sometimes a shock to notice the sudden quiet and remember you have been moving. Le Pub rides at the center of the train's consist, forming with the diner an animated isthmus between three sleepers up front and three coaches to the rear (more cars are added on weekends).

That's all there is to it: It is not a train for the jet set. But it's something. On weekends the partying tends to be more earnest. Passengers who paid extra for a roomette now fear they are missing something and are drawn back to Le Pub to investigate. The crowd is young, but not exclusively so; on the winter weekends skiers predominate. Amtrak went after these skiers, with ski baggage cars and ski package tours, trying to make this way to the slopes an attractive option.

When the energy crisis hit, the train became for many, short of hitch-hiking, the *only* way to get to the slopes. Amtrak initially expected 225 riders a day; in December, 845 rode the two trains each day, and ridership north of Springfield was up 74% for the first quarter of 1974 over the same term last year.

As the train moves north, past midnight, the skiers get off and things quiet down. When the train reaches customs, morning has arrived. Morning is never late.

One of the reasons why the Montrealer is sometimes late is the Canadian frontier; unlike Europe, customs agents here do not hop aboard and ride to and fro across the border, since there is no train coming in the other direction until night. Canadian National takes over operation of the train just before the border, and their personnel will tell you what they think causes the delays: Amtrak's equipment isn't made for the severe winters. Doors, cars, people, all freeze. There are the usual reasons for delay, as well, especially bad track and signal malfunctioning. The Montrealer's on-time record was dismal during the past winter, dropping to 29% in December from 70% in November. It struggled as high as 41% in February, and when the equipment thawed in March was back up to 73%.

For its services the Montrealer charges $31.50 for a coach seat, or $65.85 for first class and a roomette. Those fares don't meet costs, an Amtrak tradition. Amtrak says it costs $8.16 a mile to run the train, not including salaries for the hosts and hostesses. It thinks the extra long-distance riders have helped cut $500,000 from last years $2.3 million operating loss for the run, and Amtrak expects to whittle another $300,000 off next year.

For now Amtrak can only afford one run each way a day, and they depart late to pick up the business of vacationers eager to get away after work (from Washington at 5:05 pm, and from Montreal at 8:10 pm). The 17-hour trip really makes sense only when taken from one end point to the other. Skiers and French-Canadians notwithstanding, this nocturnal design has been the single biggest influence on the Montrealer's character. The logic of the trip most likely escapes the unlucky skier who is dropped midway, in the early morning, suddenly left on a station platform that is stubbornly motionless. Similarly, someone getting aboard at, say, White River Junction, Vermont, coming south, leaves behind the friends who have waited up giddily to say good bye, and climbs aboard a car that is dark and quiet. The partying is likely to have exhausted itself by now, with ex-hitch-hikers strewn about the coach seats in improvised postures, jaws ajar, like corpses in the post-bellum stillness. A second round of partying, and the traffic it generates, is obnoxious to the survivors of the first; if you don't ride from end to end you can't belong: you are a commuter.

Every morning the train coming south does pick up commuters. In fact, 60% of the train's traffic is carried just between New York and Washington. Amtrak tried to rid itself of commuters leaving Washington in the afternoon, but Congressional pressure got them reinstated.

Starting in the predawn near New Haven, all the way to Washington's Union Station, businessmen invade the nearly-empty Pub car, and with the flap and shuffle of newspaper pages they impose on the train's drift across the countryside an urgency unfathomable to the drowsy all-nighters. Before the half-shut eyes of passengers who have been sleeping since Vermont, these impatient men, sometimes standing in the aisles when Amtrak oversells, pass like ghosts, obviously oblivious to the rhythm of the all-night ride, from Montreal and the mountains. The commuters understand, though, that there is something different about this particular train; many make a point of catching it every day.

Several weeks ago, tired after a day of interviews in Washington, I stumbled to Union Station and onto a train, faintly dreading the trip home. When I realized I was on the Montrealer, an old friend, my whole attitude changed. I sat with a French exchange student in Le Pub, played the piano, ate a roast beef dinner for only $3.75, and had a good time all the way back to New York.

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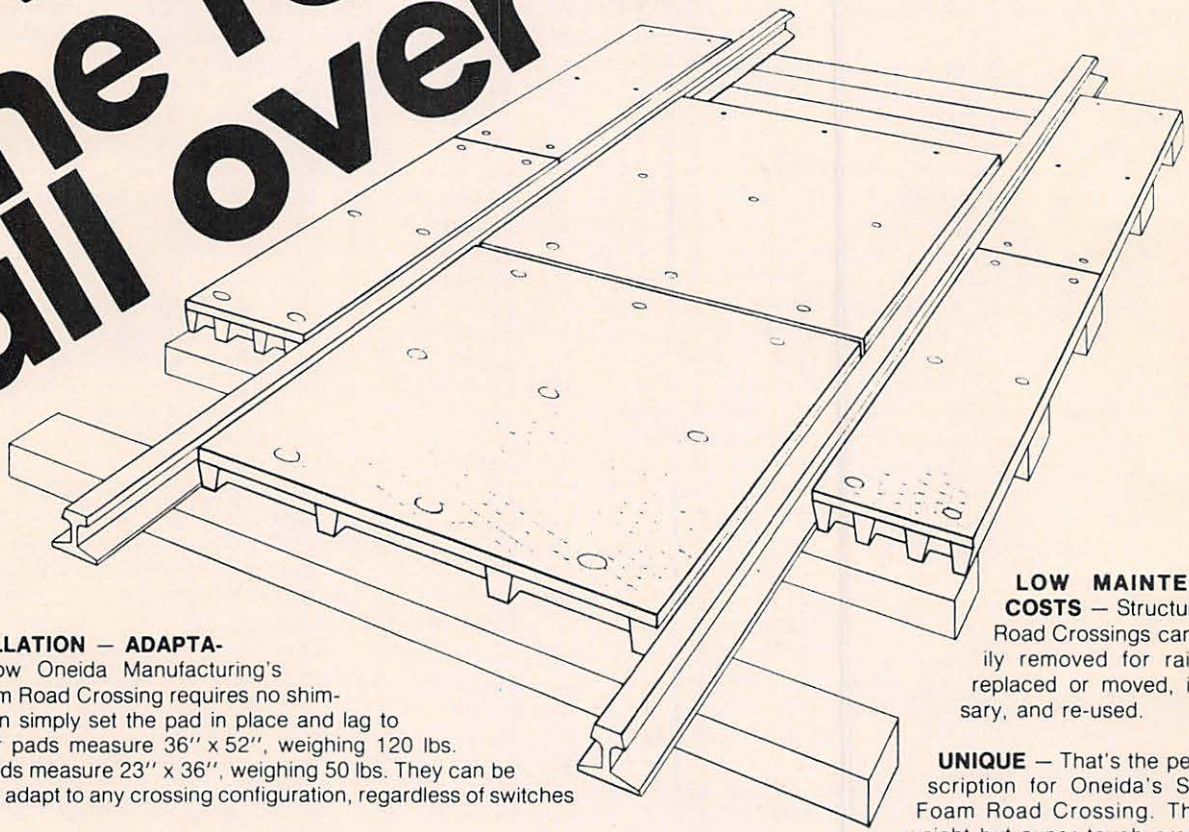

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CAUSES OF DELAYS—MARCH 1974

	ATSF	BN	B&O/ C&O	ICG	L&N	MILW	MP	PC	RF&P	SCL	SP	UP
Total trains scheduled	390	460	196	424	62	434	105	4394	248	434	212	62
Trains late	64	192	39	168	13	32	18	1266	131	164	69	5
Average delay (minutes)	46	44	46	58	95	20	47	52	26	81	110	103
Causes of Delay (Percent of Total)												
Equipment Malfunctions	5.7	6.0	16.8	8.0	21.9	5.6	2.8	6.7	20.0	14.3	6.8	9.1
Slow Orders	21.1	40.0	28.8	26.0	6.0	12.4	7.5	29.4	25.0	3.7	25.9	0
Servicing in Stations	16.0	11.9	20.9	13.0	29.5	5.6	31.8	8.5	12.9	23.9	14.9	72.7
PSGR Train Interference	6.7	1.5	3.1	2.8	5.5	1.1	2.8	7.2	3.4	23.9	4.4	9.1
FRT Train Interference	4.6	4.3	6.1	11.6	12.0	15.7	15.9	7.8	6.7	1.8	11.3	0
Waiting for Connections	3.1	1.0	3.4	0	0	14.6	0	1.6	0.8	3.0	0.9	0
Miscellaneous	7.7	8.1	4.8	9.1	5.5	10.1	3.7	6.6	3.3	3.1	5.5	9.1
Passenger Related Delays	8.8	21.1	10.3	13.3	7.1	7.9	10.3	20.9	6.0	15.5	15.6	0
Signal Failures	17.0	5.0	3.4	13.4	7.6	16.9	19.6	4.7	3.3	10.4	12.1	0
Maintenance of Way	1.6	0.2	1.4	0.2	0.5	5.6	0	4.2	2.1	0.1	1.6	0
Running Time	7.2	0.8	1.0	2.3	2.2	3.4	5.6	2.2	16.3	0.2	0.7	0
Employee Failure	0.5	0.1	0	0.3	2.2	1.1	0	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	0

period of time." He also said that successful demonstrations would doubtless be necessary, but that due to BR's own urgent need for HST's, it would probably be two years before a demonstration train could be brought to the U.S.

Lewis concedes that turbos eat up more fuel than diesel-hauled trains. (Studies have shown that a 3,000-hp diesel produces 270-350 seat-miles per gallon of fuel, compared with 110 for the RTG turbos now being used in the Midwest.) But, says Lewis, the turbo's great record of reliability, and its fast speeds and quick turnaround times, still make it worthwhile for corridor service.

NORTHEAST: WHAT—AND WHEN?

It is likely that half a billion dollars, and very possibly much more, will be poured into Northeast Corridor improvements in the next five to 10 years. But these improvements probably will not come as quickly or as easily as the Congress seemed to think when it approved the Northeast Rail Reorganization Act four months ago. At that time Senator Claiborne Pell (D.-R.I.) rose on the floor to ask if, as he understood it, "some $500 million has been earmarked for the upgrading of the rolling stock and the tracks in Megalopolis. Is that correct?"

Senator Vance Hartke (D.-Ind.) replied: "The earmarking is not specific, but it is pretty clear in the report that that is what it is for. In addition, we have assurances from the DOT that they are going to move immediately to upgrade the Corridor."

The aim, as expressed then by Hartke, was to reduce rail travel time between New York and Washington to 2 hours, and between New York and Boston to 2½ hours. A 1973 updated DOT report, on which the Corridor provision of the Northeast Act was based, said the improvements necessary to reach these goals—including welded rail, a complete fencing of the right of way, revised signaling, increased banking on curves, new electrification, and new rolling stock—would cost $697 million. Officials at both Amtrak and DOT feel that these improvements will be made eventually, but it now appears that, at least under the present legislation, nowhere near that much money is going to be available.

What the relevant section of the Act actually provided was $500 million, with the chance to come back for $200 million more. With this money, in the form of government-guaranteed loans, Congress ordered that Amtrak "purchase, lease or otherwise acquire" the Corridor passenger facilities, and that the improvements which the DOT plan had described earlier be made. But close examination of the Act's language reveals that this "earmarked" money is also to be used to accomplish other provisions of the Northeast reorganization: to help non-Conrail roads to assist in implementing the final Conrail plan; to help state, local or regional authorities to purchase and rehabilitate lines not in the final Conrail system; and to help railroads connecting with the bankrupts avoid reorganization proceedings.

Into DOT's lap has fallen the problem of deciding who gave what to whom. Asaph Hall, head of a new Northeast Corridor Program Office at the Department, explains, "What we're now doing is the hard work that wasn't done when the bill was written." He says planning is now proceeding in three directions:

(1) Hall's office is working with Amtrak and USRA on a detailed plan for implementing the Northeast Corridor provisions of the Act. Some questions now being tackled: Who will perform the work? Will it be done inside or outside the government? How will it be financed? ("Congress gave us a financial plan, but not a financing plan," Hall observes.) This over-all plan—partly a further update of DOT's 1973 Corridor plan—will be tied into the preliminary Conrail system plan, due Oct. 1.

(2) The Federal Railroad Administration is working, meanwhile, on contracts for engineering studies which will identify specific Corridor improvements and costs. Present thinking is that these will be broken down into two broad segments: New Haven-Boston, and New Haven-Washington. Separate contracts are likely to be awarded for electrification and signaling studies, and for financial and economic analyses.

The Act authorized $6.2 million in grant money for these studies. Some 20 engineering firms responded to FRA's initial call for proposals.

(3) Pending implementation of these comparatively long-range products, DOT will work with Penn Central and Amtrak to identify work that needs to be done over the next two years just to maintain current operations. Amtrak has budgeted $100 million over the next two years for right-of-way improvements, chiefly in the Northeast and Midwest corridors, but Amtrak is "reprogramming" its budget to help finance its new equipment purchases, and no one knows how much of this money will be available for right-of-way.

But money, says Hall, may not be so

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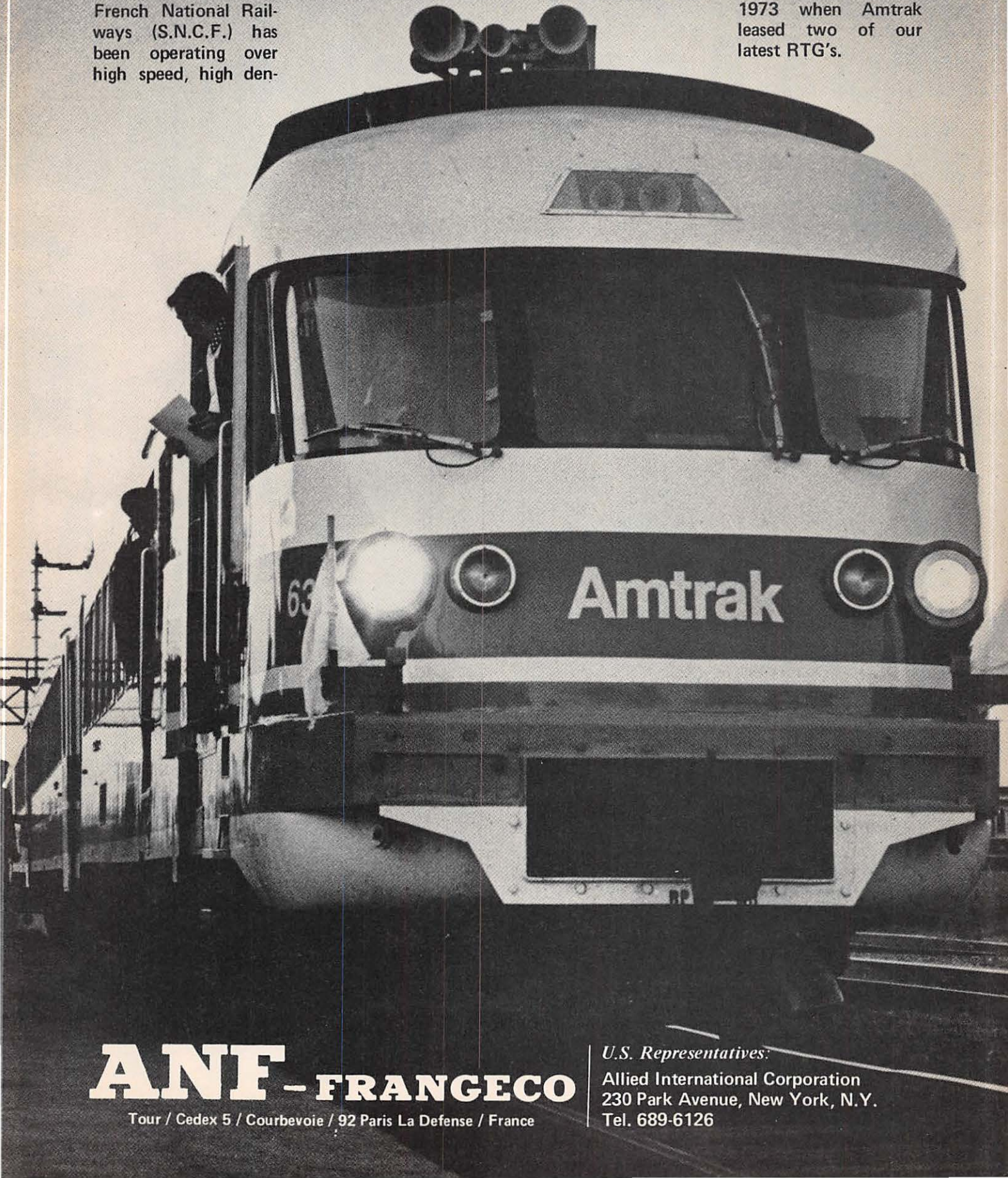

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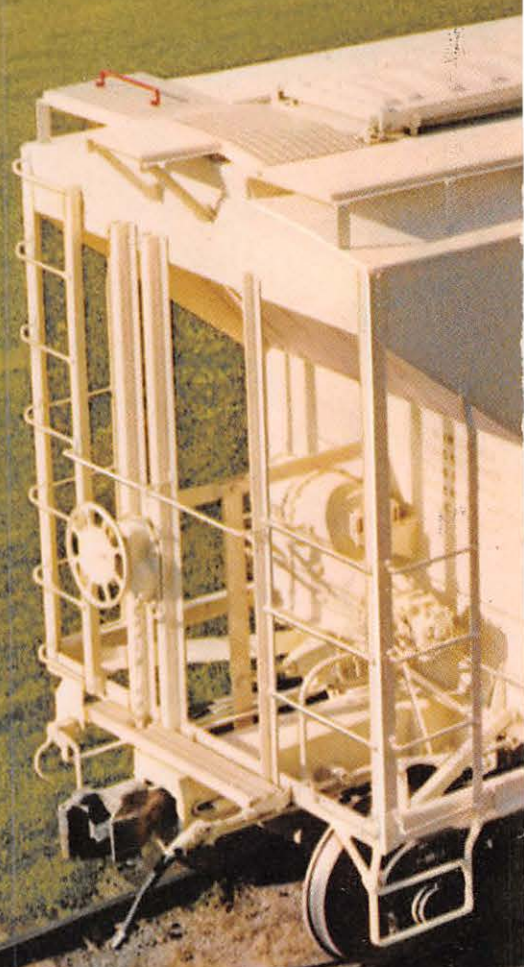

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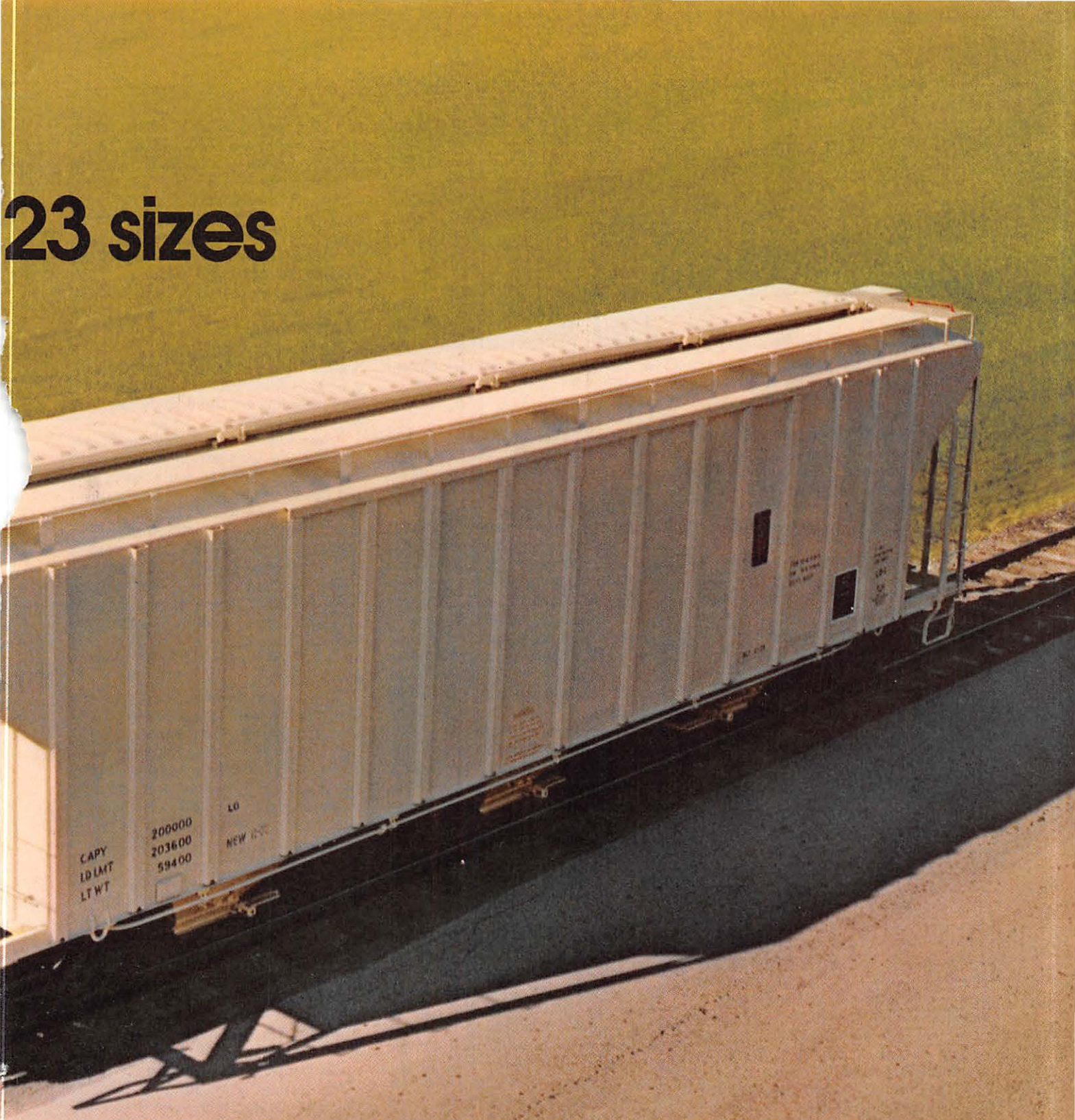

Standard

AMTRAK PRESIDENT LEWIS (right) and marketing chief Graham find that their problem now is not so much to "sell" riders as to accommodate them.

much of a problem as shortages of such materials as crossties and rail. There is also, he adds, a shortage of skilled labor to perform the work.

AMTRAK AND THE RAILROADS

Passenger complaints about Amtrak service are often met with the response, "Sorry, but that's the railroad's fault, not ours." That may be changing. Amtrak and the 13 railroads that operate its trains have been renegotiating their contracts; Amtrak hopes that a contract now worked out with its biggest carrier, Penn Central, may serve as a model for the others.

Under the new contract (which was still awaiting court approval early in May) Penn Central would receive a base payment of $134.5 million from Amtrak during the fiscal year—$10 million to $12 million more than PC would receive under the existing agreement. This falls short of what Penn Central had been seeking as fair compensation, but as one PC officer commented. "It's the best we can do."

What really interests Amtrak in the new agreement are the on-time standards it imposes, the bonuses it will provide when those standards are exceeded, and the penalties to be imposed when they are not met. Basically, an on-time average of 70% is specified for the Northeast Corridor and 65% on other PC routes. In the corridor, for example, a 1% improvement over the agreed-upon on-time performance (or 71%) would mean a $35,000 monthly bonus. An overall 75% record would mean an extra $175,000 a month, 85% would mean $525,000, 95% would mean $875,000 and 100% would mean $1,050,000.

For non-corridor trains, a 1% improvement (to 66%) would mean a $12,500 monthly bonus, an overall 70% record would mean an extra $62,500, 80% would mean $187,000, 90% would mean $312,500 and 100% would mean $437,500.

On the other hand PC faces penalties for individual trains that arrive late. Each train's lateness tolerance and penalty rate is specified. For example, the Metroliner, with a tolerance of 10 minutes, would cost PC $5 for every minute it is late after the first 10 minutes. A sampling of other PC trains shows that a New York-Philadelphia train has a tolerance of only 5 minutes, with a $7-per-minute penalty fine thereafter; the New York-Chicago Broadway has a 30-minute tolerance and a $4.50-per-minute assessment.

The incentive/penalty program has other ramifications. For example, there will be bonuses when whole schedules are improved. There will be penalties when agreed-upon standards of cleanliness and equipment repair are not met.

But improved on-time performance is Amtrak's major goal. On-time performance slipped to a system-wide low of around 60% in 1973. There has been some improvement since then. In March of this year, for example, Penn Central's trains as a whole compiled a 71.2% on-time record, up from 60.1% in February.

Says Roger Lewis: "My hope is that the Penn Central contract can serve as some kind of model for others; then maybe we can get rid of this audit business. It's also my hope that once we get on a more conventional American-type business relationship with the railroads, particularly where we can pay them something if they do a better job, that our relations will improve."

Amtrak hopes to start its Midwest-Florida auto-ferry service in mid-summer. The service will be similar to that started May 10 by Auto-Train, a private company, over the same track. Amtrak's auto carriers will be enclosed on the sides and top, but not completely enclosed like Auto-Train's.

ROUTES AND SERVICE

Pre-Amtrak, the railroads operated 53,000 miles of passenger routes; DOT shrank Amtrak's legacy of this 23,000 miles. Many assumed the system would keep shrinking; actually, Amtrak today is operating over 23,500 route miles. Car-miles tell an even more impressive story. They are now up 25% from the day Amtrak came into being, which means, says one Amtrak officer, "We're giving a hell of a lot more service with the same plant."

Among new services are triweekly trains introduced in March between St. Louis and Dallas via Little Rock, and between Oakland and Bakersfield through California's San Joaquin Valley.

This month Amtrak will increase service on the Chicago-Seattle North Coast Hiawatha from triweekly to daily; it also plans a special daily train from Seattle to the Spokane World's Fair. Amtrak will have its own exhibit at the Fair including an audio-visual sampling of Amtrak routes.

Under the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973, the corporation is required to add an experimental route each year and operate it for two years. The most likely candidate for the first such route now seems to be Boston-Chicago via Cleveland (although this would require restoring some 12 miles of track removed by Penn Central in 1972). Until early in 1972, when promised state subsidies failed to come through, Amtrak had operated a "403b train" over much of this route through Cleveland and Toledo.

It is Section 403b of the Amtrak act that requires the corporation to provide new train service if a state is willing to pay two-thirds of the operating losses. The idea has become a hot one: it gives legislators a popular way to react to the energy crisis. The problem is that Amtrak doesn't have enough equipment to accommodate all requests. Equipment supply is, in fact, so tight that Amtrak has had to cancel its own plans to add another Broadway (New York-Chicago) and West Wind (Chicago-Los Angeles) daily. (West Wind is the new name of the old Super Chief; Santa Fe asked that the old name be retired. Also at Santa Fe's request, the Texas Chief has been renamed: it's now the Lone Star state.)

The strain on equipment will abate after the summer peak, and in September Amtrak will introduce its newest 403b service: Port Huron, Mich., to Chicago. Other 403b services already include Chicago-Quincy, Chicago-Dubuque, Chicago-Springfield, Chicago-Champaign, Boston-Springfield, and Philadelphia-Harrisburg.

For Amtrak's public, no recent service improvement has been more enthusiastically welcomed than the computerized Advanced Reservation and Ticketing System that went into nationwide operation in April. One passenger, accustomed to long waits at ticket offices, went to Amtrak's downtown New York office a few days ago to order a bedroom on the West Wind for a day in July. "I had my bedroom in car 401 in about 30 seconds," he reports. ■

Amtrak CHOSE GRS

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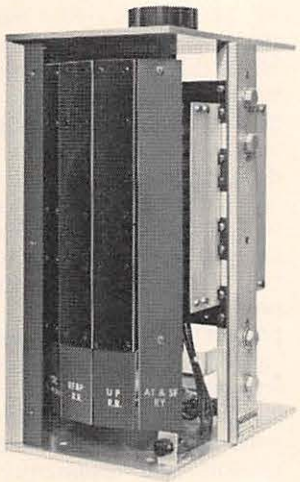
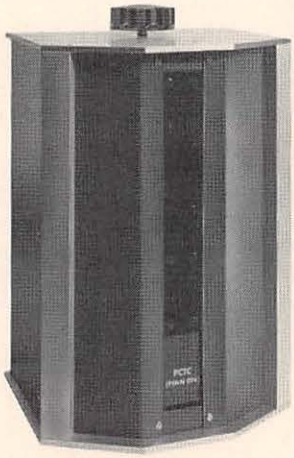
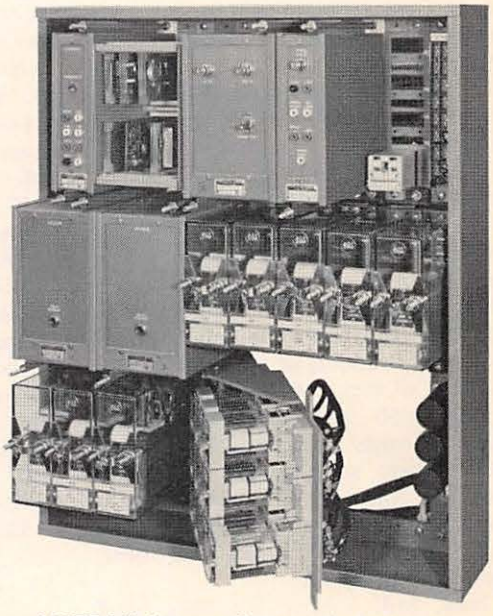
SPEED CONTROL
TRAIN STOP



AMTRAK cab signal indicator, shown with cover removed. A turn of a knob sets the indicator to show the aspects of any of five different railroads, including color-light and position-light aspects.



AMTRAK cab signal indicator set for Penn Central, Pennsylvania Division, aspects.



AMTRAK locomotive-carried equipment rack for cab signaling and speed control. All plug-in modules, with swing-out, easy access to wiring.

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RAILROADS AND THEIR PUBLICS – III

How the industry is pushing for grass

By GUS WELTY, Senior Editor

In the beginning, there was the railroad. And the people looked at the railroad and saw that it was good. And so they built their towns and cities around the railroad, their homes and stores and factories. And the people prospered (as, by the way, did the railroad).

That, by and large, was the story of the development of the mid-continent and everything west of there during the mid- and late-1800s. And if it reads a bit like the first chapter of Genesis, so be it—because in those days, for much of that vast region, the railroad was god, the god of commerce and travel and even payroll.

In the area east of mid-America, things were a bit different. There, for the most part, "civilization" preceded the coming of the iron horse. But there, too, the railroad was indispensable—linking existing centers of commerce and population and providing the reason for the founding of new ones.

It was all very, very good. It was also all 100-or-50 years ago—those days when railroads laid out towns and stocked them with people, those days when the coming of the railroad to a little community was the signal for an all-day party, with band and beer, speeches and so forth.

● **Then, and...** Now, it's 1974. And the glory days are largely gone.

Then, it was a brilliant idea, to build a town straddling the tracks. Now, the railroad is cursed for stalling traffic at grade crossings.

Then, the railroad brought industry and industry brought jobs and the combination put more than a few communities on the map, for real. Now, the railroad gets rapped for running through town too fast. Or, too slow. And who can sleep when the engineer keeps sounding that damned horn? Or, somebody's going to get killed because the engineers don't sound the horn at crossings. And besides, who wants industry? Industry pollutes.

Then, it was a mark of distinction to live near the railroad. Now, only those who can't afford to move still live by the railroad. Urban decay, crime, vandalism, you name it. You can see it and its evidences from the window of almost any passenger train entering or leaving a town or city.

Then, railroads had clout. It would be neither unfair nor inaccurate to observe that railroads had working control of more than a couple of state legislatures. In towns, cities and states, what railroads wanted, they had a pretty good chance of getting. Now, at these localized levels railroads have been put in a position where they have to do more fending-off then fighting-for.

But, the "now" picture is by no means all black. Then, railroads had it made because the railroad was the *only* way to ship or travel. Now, railroads have the opportunity to make it again in public esteem because the railroad is the *smart* way to ship or travel: Energy smart, environmentally smart, even economically smart.

● **Now—and how?** The question is, how do railroads take advantage of that opportunity? And the answers are by no means simple or even, in all cases, well-defined.

First off, so much of the industry's future is wrapped up in what is happening in Washington that there is a natural dilution of what is happening outside of Washington.

Second, some roads have allowed system representation to deteriorate in the public or community relations area. One example, admittedly of an in-extremis railroad: Penn Central today doesn't have a public affairs/public relations representative west of Philadelphia.

Third, with so much of the public (and even so much of the media, which ought to know better) equating "railroad" with "passenger train," back-and-forth sniping between Amtrak and its contracting roads doesn't help. From an operational standpoint, there is no doubt that some railroads deserve criticism. But Amtrak can't be held blameless. Witness Santa Fe's decision to withdraw permission for use of "Chief" names, after Santa Fe took a long look at Amtrak's plans for the upcoming heavy-travel season. Witness the angry reaction of Texas & Pacific and Missouri Pacific to Amtrak comments regarding its St. Louis/Laredo train. And then there is Amtrak's sloganeering to the effect that it is making the trains worth riding again—sloganeering which may be great for the Amtrak image but remains an insult to some of the roads Amtrak depends upon for operation of its trains.

Fourth, the trend toward centralization in railroad control has had to have its effect on reducing meaningful contact between management and the people it serves. In this context, one property that will be especially interesting to watch will be Burlington Northern, which set itself up at the time of merger with six strong regional organizations—and which now has both public relations and community relations re-

What do people really think about

More than a little bit of money has been spent in recent years to try to get an answer to that question—and the results would have to be judged both encouraging and discouraging.

In general, opinion polls have tended to show that railroads are regarded as essential—though not quite as essential as airlines and highway carriers. In general, polls have turned up many more people favoring government assistance than opting for nationalization as a means of helping to handle industry problems. In general, polls have found that a good number of people blame either management or rail labor for the railroads' problems, with a smaller—but growing—percentage laying the blame at the doorstep of the Federal government. In general, polls have discovered that those surveyed have no great respect for rail management, ranking it well down on the list in comparison with management of other major industries. In general, there seems to be little doubt but that the bankruptcy problem in the Northeast—and that old albatross, passenger business—are the biggest factors in the public's negative image-consciousness.

(No poll has been taken since passage of the rail-reorganization legislation, so it remains to be seen what effect this will have on the image of the industry generally.)

A couple of educated guesses might be made about what a poll taken today would show and what it might mean. One is that management/labor tensions would rank lower as a primary cause of poor image and rail difficulties generally; a corollary is that labor would probably get more credit than management for this easing of tensions, which

roots support

presentation at each regional headquarters.

Fifth, the mood of the public is simply down on business. Blame it partly on Nader and consumerism. Blame it partly on disgust with big government, which is equated with big business, no matter what Administration happens to be in power. Blame it partly on big labor, which causes trouble for big business, and the public puts a pox on both houses. Blame it partly on the inability of business—railroads included—to explain why it is necessary to make a profit, why (in the case of the railroads) it is necessary to earn a lot more than 3% on investment.

● **The "positive" comes through.** So far, this story of railroads relating to people seems mostly negative. But there is a lot that is positive—and productive.

Consider, for example, the recent ASTRO and STA programs. Railroad public relations people, with an industry program to deal with, mobilized as perhaps they never had before. Under their direction, basically, people from all areas of management—and labor, as well—spread the word about railroads, their problems, their potential, their needs. One of the industry's many p.r. pro's headed up that effort, Donald T. Martin, vice president-public relations and advertising of Seaboard Coast Line. And while it is true that the ASTRO and STA programs didn't get Washington off the dime, they did produce an outpouring of public support—which, many observers believe, will be translated into action in Congress this year.

Consider also the residual value of nostalgia. This, admittedly, is a dangerous subject, but if nostalgia is handled right, maybe it works. Certainly, nobody could argue about the crowds that show up when Southern sends out its mini-fleet of steam locomotives, or when Union Pacific fires up the 8444. Over the past decade or so, rail museums have sprung up in some of the most unlikely places. So have tourist-railroads. So have clubs. At the same time, veteran p.r. men recall past excursions into trying to get railfan support for needed legislation. The results: Zilch—possibly because, as some suspect, the railfan is (1) strictly a nostalgia buff who couldn't care less about the present and future of the industry, or (2) an armchair railroad president who knows he could do a better job than the jerk who is currently president, so if he has problems, well, that's his problem.

Consider history. Railroads, probably more than any other American industry, have a long and close affiliation with the communities and the people they serve. That used to be a plus. Today, it's a chancy thing—but it is something that ought to be rebuilt, especially now that railroads can show newly-discovered "inherent advantages" in energy conservation and environmental protection.

● **What's happening up top?** Consider industry leadership. It seems to be generally conceded that AAR President Stephen Ailes is the best thing that has happened to the AAR in years, and that the AAR organization in general in the public affairs area has been improved. AAR's board of directors, on occasion in the past a bickering bunch of rugged but shortsighted individualists, seems to be pulling together. Still, AAR's main job is Washington. Development of grass-roots support for and understanding of industry programs is, and probably always will be, the responsibility of individual roads, acting individually or in concert with roads serving the same areas. Plus Point 1: As a group, top railroad officers are becoming more vocal, speaking out more than before and managing to get good forums for their messages. Plus Point 2: As a group, railroad public relations officers are more knowledgeable, more effective and more respected—inside and outside their companies—than before. Now, though,

railroads?

isn't altogether fair or accurate. A second guess would be that many if not most (if not all) of the people putting the primary rap for railroad ills upon management would concede that all they know about management is what they read in the print media and hear/see on tv. A third is that while Amtrak has spent heavily for advertising and the news media have done a pretty fair job of talking about passenger trains in terms of Amtrak, people still think in terms of "railroad passenger service." A fourth might be that people simply don't think railroads spend enough for paint.

And it isn't enough to look at what people think and protest "That's wrong." It may well be. But if people think it—well, right or wrong, it's real to them, and, it remains a problem that must be dealt with.

"I don't write briefs, and the lawyers don't write press releases. But we sure do talk an awful lot together"

Minus Point 1: As potentially troublesome as the slashing-back on public relations forces that has taken place on some roads is the occasional tendency to handle p.r.-type assignments in a way that shows little feel for the job of relating the company to the public—or, importantly, relating the public to the company. Minus Point 2: In too many cases, p.r. is informed about what is going to happen rather than being consulted while the decision-making process is still under way—and while a p.r. influence couldn't and maybe shouldn't force a change in a gut-type decision, a p.r. input could often help in getting better play for good news and in getting at least understanding play for bad news.

How are railroads attacking the problem of developing empathy? In ways so diverse that it is impossible at this point to judge whether one approach is right and another isn't—because the jury is not yet in.

Consider first the ASTRO/STA programs—which proved that railroad people *can* communicate effectively, given good direction and a program they can believe in. SCL's Don Martin, with understandable pride, calls it "the greatest grass-roots campaign I have ever had anything to do with or know anything about."

These were, of course, carefully-structured operations. The country was divided into 19 areas, each with an area coordinator who then named a chairman and vice chairman for each state, as well as district chairmen—with the districts usually coinciding with legislative-district boundaries. As Martin puts it, "We weren't concerned with what railroad anyone worked for, and our people got to thinking in terms of belonging to the railroad industry. And thus the effect produced was an effect relating to the industry rather than to any individual company."

The organization's first job was to advise and inform the public—about railroad problems and proposed solutions, beginning with ASTRO and evolving into STA. Then came the action phase—a kind of "get out the vote" drive in which this volunteer p.r. army launched letter-writing campaigns and encouraged organizations of all kinds to add their support. What did the campaign produce? More than 5,000 speeches, to audiences totaling more than 200,000 persons. Personal contacts with at least 60,000 shippers, 6,000 news-media influences and 20,000 persons in other types of organizations. A tremendous volume of news-media coverage which the industry would not otherwise have had. And about 750,000 letters. The campaign did not produce the specific legislative action requested. But, says Don Martin, "I'm confident that this grass-roots effort had a very material effect on bringing about the passage of the Northeast bill—as well as providing for an excellent climate for the consideration, and hopefully for the passage, of bills now under consideration."

As for the ASTRO/STA organization, it has now evolved into a Community Affairs Organization—designed to supplement, not to replace, individual-railroad efforts "whenever and wherever needed."

● **Who's doing what?** In the meantime, those individual-railroad efforts are taking a variety of shapes—in a variety of organizational structures.

For a long time, a number of roads have encouraged supervisory people—superintendents, trainmasters, sales managers—to be Mr. (or Ms.) Railroad in their communities. Few have promoted this, however, with the intensity of Missouri Pacific—which, for more than 10 years, has given every management trainee an exposure to public relations, advertising, community relations, which is more thorough than that provided on most other roads. Assistant Vice President-Public Relations and Advertising Harry E. Hammer puts it this way: "After all, who has a greater stake [than railroads] in communities they serve? What industry has more so-called 'plant cities'? Today, a large number of our people are active in community affairs organizations, and we ask them to represent MoPac. Let's face it, we do try to be good citizens and good neighbors in on-line communities. When problems arise, we try to solve them as quickly as possible. And I'm convinced that having people active at the community level helps prevent minor problems from becoming crises."

Burlington Northern goes about the "involvement" thing in a different way, with a separate community-relations department—like the public relations department, headed by a vice president;

"The times they are a-changing"

As folksinger Bob Dylan once observed, "The times, they are a-changing." But sometimes you wonder if railroads are changing with them, fast enough, everywhere that they should be changing. For instance, two points for consideration in tandem: (1) Railroads say they want to get more involved, they want their people to get more involved, in communities and with people everywhere, and (2) in both business and social contacts, this is an increasingly informal era we live in, an era in which the casual greeting seems to be the order of the day.

Now, bounce those points against a fast riffle through the pages of the Official Guide or the Pocket List, in either of which anybody who is anybody on a railroad is listed. And what do you find? You find, as a hipshot guess, 90%-plus of railroad folk peering back at you from behind two initials and a last name.

Of course, there could be valid reasons for this. Initials almost always save space, and in this day and age paper and printing costs can be pretty horrendous. And sure, some people just seem to prefer initials for reasons which may be obvious, such as O.-for-Orenthal J. Simpson or Y.-for-Yelverton A. Tittle—though the writer of the accompanying piece, A.-for-Augustus D. Welty, prefers Gus (and if you're wondering what the D. stands for, forget it). And possibly the initials among railroad people reflect a lingering "Call Me Mister" syndrome, a hangover from past days when a railroad really was a military structure and if you deviated from a strict class-and-rank pattern you did so at your own considerable risk.

But this, after all, is 1974. Railroads insist they need closer contact and better rapport between railroaders and shippers, politicians, community leaders, media people and so forth. Railroads, unless we've missed something someplace, also have been trying to encourage a greater "industry" feeling among people working for different companies. So, why make the friendly approach tough at the outset?

(The writer of the accompanying story adds one further thought: "When the phone rings and the voice at the other end begins 'Mister Welty,' I start to wonder whether I've got a too-dignified acquaintance, a too-reticent stranger or somebody with a mad-on. Besides, it makes me feel old.")

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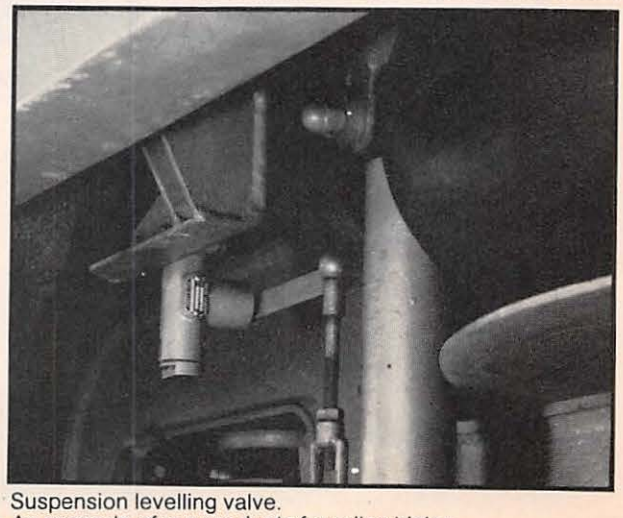

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"We are getting the best performance in railroad history, and it is our job to make this known and recognized..."

says John C. Ashton, the community-relations VP: "We're encouraging, urging and cajoling our 44,000 employees to court the public in ways no other railroad in the nation's history has attempted—and, what's more, we're chalking up some successes."

Thus far, BN can count more than 1,000 employees involved actively in community programs of one sort or another—and if 1,000 out of 44,000 doesn't seem like much, at least it's a start. BN's public relations and advertising department, under Vice President Albert M. Rung, takes a different tack toward getting BN known as a good citizen. There was that series of tv commercials aimed at consumers (and shown principally on news programs and pro footback games) in which BN pointed out how little rail transportation adds to the cost of common items—cherries, tuna, paint.

More recently, there is BN's expensive but excellently-done film, "Portrait of a Railroad," which has thus far been entered in three film competitions and won three top awards (the third coming late in April at the U.S. Industrial Film Festival in Chicago).

The tv commercials broke the well-known law of letter-writing which says that nobody writes unless he's mad: Rung's file bulges with letter of praise, including many from what would have to be regarded as influential citizens—including shippers. As for the motion picture, it ran for four weeks at Radio City Music Hall, it has appeared in theaters on billings with top attractions from "Serpico" to "The Sting" to, in the case of a theater in New Jersey, "Deep Throat." Says Al Rung: "Theater owners have written us their unbelieving observations of audience reaction: People are even applauding."

● **But what's the ROI?** This kind of promotion, along with other things other railroads are doing, could be regarded as showmanship—and costly showmanship at that. Is it worth it? Is it worth spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on a movie? Is it worth going through the travail of keeping aging steam locomotives in safe service? Is it worth running special trains to special events? Efforts in the areas of public relations, community relations, advertising, corporate promotion are always hard to measure, in terms of dollar return. Those who invest in the more gaudy kinds of promotion will, naturally, defend their decisions—and they have their critics. But they also have their backers. As one p.r. director says, "We don't go on tv, we don't produce movies, we don't run steam, we're limited in staff and budget. But if a railroad decides it wants to and can afford to do some of these flamboyant things, swell. Because *any* positive exposure helps."

(It might be noted that although relatively few railroads have taken to the tube, those that have get a round of applause from many of those that haven't—because the messages presented, while they have a specific-railroad orientation, also do get across the theme that this is indeed a new railway age.)

One element of grass-roots involvement that also deserves a comment is the matter of the relationship between the public and community relations people and the lawyers. On some roads, the two groups work closely together; on others, there is a distinct separation of powers, with legislative matters being left strictly to the law department. But, there has got to be an overlap—because public opinion *can* affect legislation at whatever level (city council's pondering a 10-mph speed limit or the legislature proposing restructive tax legislation) and public opinion is the p.r. man's field.

One veteran public relations director reflects on the legislative situation in the dozen or so states his railroad touches: "The volume of legislation affecting us hasn't really changed. It's still huge. In any session, there is a large volume of legislation that could affect us in one area or another, for good or for bad. In some places, too, you still find the labor organizations trying to use the legislature as a kind of court of appeals—a place where they can go to get things they couldn't get through the normal process of bargaining."

So how is the sometimes-delicate p.r./legislative relationship handled? "Well," this p.r. man observes, "we have an agreement. I don't write briefs, and the lawyers don't write press releases. But we sure do talk an awful lot together."

(Where public relations and legislative efforts can be closely coordinated—though not necessarily without differences of opinion—results can be impressive. Perhaps the best cases in point: The success railroads have had, either through legislative action or through referendum, in securing repeal of state crew-consist laws.)

● **Looking ahead—with optimism.** What's the future for railroad public relations, public affairs, community relations, community affairs departments? And what are their chances for continued success in acceptance and understanding of the message?

The future looks reasonably good, for several reasons:

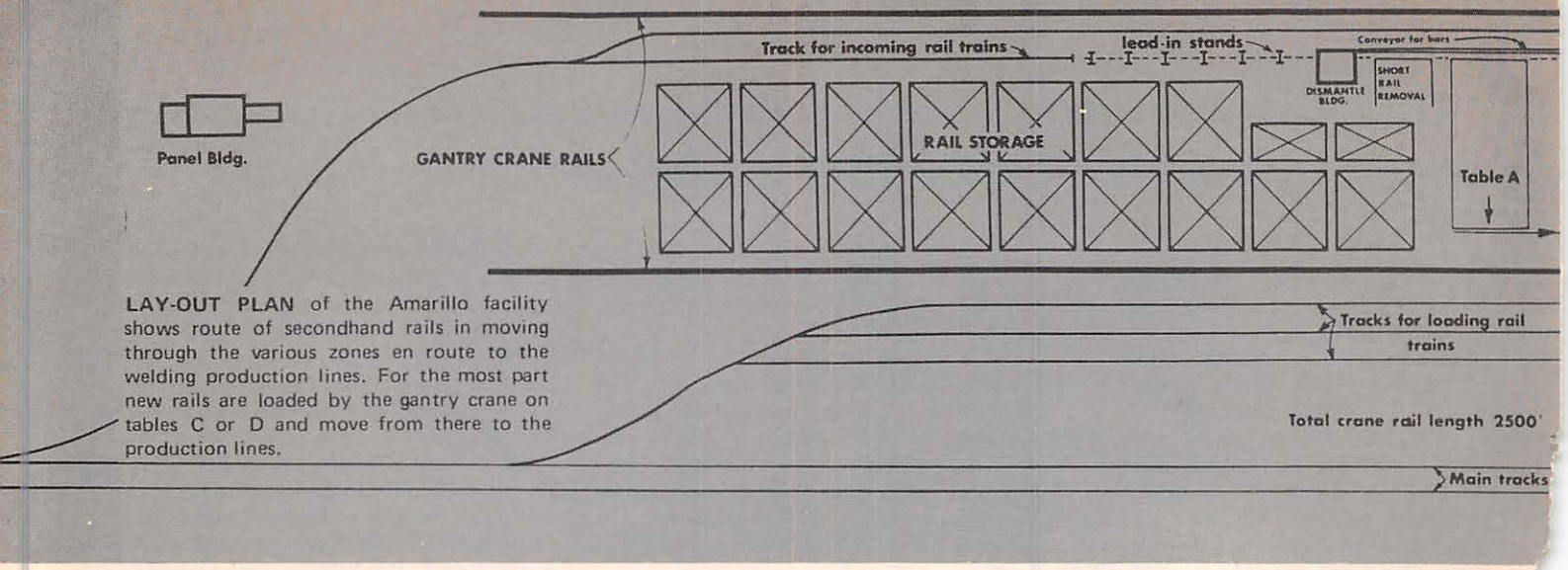
—People working in p.r. and related areas are getting greater acceptance in their own companies, and this has to come first. One evidence: The growing number of railroads that recognize the p.r. function by title. Public relations in the broad sense is now recognized with vice-presidential rank on roads from coast-to-coast—Bangor & Aroostook, Penn Central, Seaboard Coast Line, Norfolk & Western, Chessie, Santa Fe, Burlington Northern, Southern Pacific, Rock Island. It's a trend that should—and *should*—continue. (In addition, a number of roads—among them Southern, Missouri Pacific, Illinois Central Gulf, Louisville & Nashville—have the direct p.r. operation under an assistant vice president. At Katy, it's at the vice-presidential level, but the vp's primary responsibility is sales-and-service; Frisco has been going through a reorganization process, with the naming of the former vp-operations as vp-corporate affairs and the subsequent naming of a number of assistant vice presidents.)

—The story that can be told is, for the most part, a better one. Rail service is, in fact, improving. Such things as runthrough trains, improvements in blocking, addition of coal unit trains are positive steps. TOFC/COFC is picking up this year at a rate that borders on the fantastic, up by about one-third from two years ago. These are things that can be related, not just to customers but to the public.

—Railroads are becoming more open about what they are doing and, in some cases, even about what they are planning to do. This has to do in part with what Railway Age once called the "new breed" in railroad management. Veteran reporters can recall the days when a number of roads put such constraints on newsmen as to make those roads virtually off-limits. That has changed, and is changing. Today, three such formerly reticent roads that come quickly to mind are open. You can go and talk with people, and they come and talk with you. What happened? In each case, the suspicion is, public relations people kept the pressure on. And when new management came in, as it did in each case, that new management adopted a positive p.r. attitude. Significantly, perhaps, in two out of those three cases public relations is now represented at the vice-presidential level.

—Government finally bit the bullet, as they say in the bureaucracy, and the Federal Railroad Administration is a promoter of rail transportation (as it was supposed to be from the start), in its role as advocate and advisor to the

(Continued on page 44)



LAY-OUT PLAN of the Amarillo facility shows route of secondhand rails in moving through the various zones en route to the welding production lines. For the most part new rails are loaded by the gantry crane on tables C or D and move from there to the production lines.

Santa Fe's welded rail plant aims at

The use of continuous welded rail is producing big savings for railroads. If those savings are to be maximized, large investments are required, at least on the major roads, to provide installations and equipment that will make it possible to produce CWR from both new and secondhand rail at minimum cost.

Santa Fe's new centralized rail welding plant at Amarillo, Tex., to be dedicated on May 14, provides an example of how this line of reasoning works out in practice. On about 30 acres of land alongside its main line, Santa Fe has created a double-line rail butt-welding complex designed to produce approximately five miles of butt-welded rail daily in two eight-hour shifts the year around.

● **A $5-million project.** Including installation of a Train Control System needed to expedite movement of rail trains into and out of the plant, the cost of the project came to more than $5 million.

But that's only part of the story. At the same time the railroad made the decision to build the plant it was also decided that henceforth rail released during rail-laying operations would be picked up in one-quarter-mile jointed strings and shipped to Amarillo to be disjointed, cropped and welded into continuous strings. Previously, these rails had been disjointed in the field.

Highly specialized equipment is required for picking up, loading and hauling jointed strings. To provide this equipment on the Santa Fe required an additional investment of $3 million. Previously, released rails had been disjointed in the field, which required that they be loaded, hauled and unloaded as single 39-foot lengths.

● **Features of welding lines.** The central feature of the new installation is the double-line welding plant, in each line of which the rails are butt-welded by an A-I electric-flash butt-welder. Like other features of the plant, the welding lines are highly automated. The first unit in each production line is a machine which operates automatically to remove scale, rust and grease from those areas of the rails that are engaged by the welding electrodes.

The welding machines themselves incorporate the latest technology in the design of such machines. One feature is a device which corrects any twist that may be present in the rail ends.

The first unit beyond the welder in each line is an A-I stripper which removes the upset metal from the newly made welds. Using a device actuated by the heat from the weld, this machine is positioned automatically to allow the stripper device to go into operation.

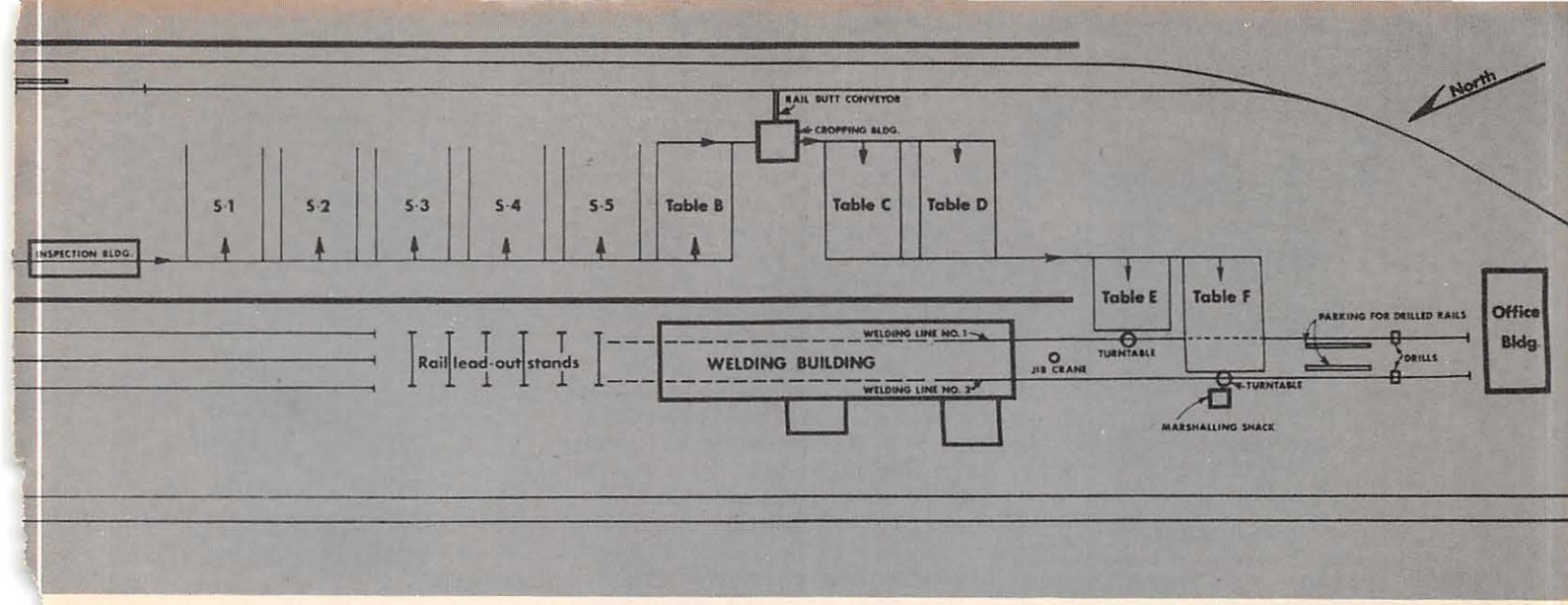
Beyond the stripper in each production line the new welds pass successively through the grinding station where the welds are ground by hand-held grinders; a Finlay press for doing any necessary straightening of the rails; and the inspection station where the new welds are tested for defects by the magnetic particle method. Some finish grinding may also be done at this location.

Final unit in each welding production line is a Holland pusher by means of which the newly welded strings are pushed through lead-out stands and into rack cars. There is a line of Holland motor-operated lead-out stands for each production line. Each stand can be adjusted vertically and laterally by controls inside the welding building. Trains for receiving the welded strings can be spotted on any of three tracks.

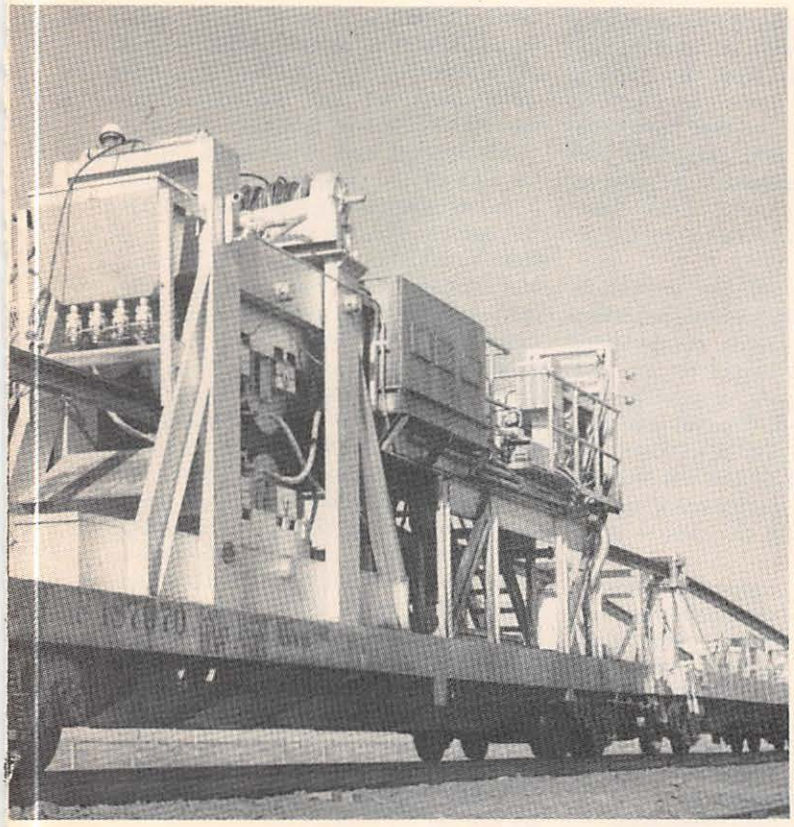
The projected average production of each welding line per eight-hour shift is 160 welds. Thus, for two shifts total projected production is 640 welds.

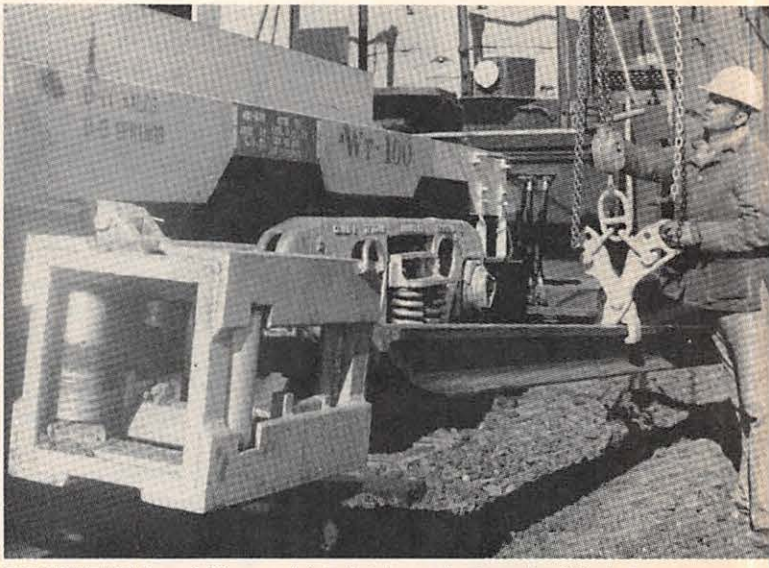
● **Back-up facilities.** All other features of the welding complex have a single purpose—the preparation and delivery of both new and secondhand rails to the two welding production lines. As shown by the drawing, these features include a huge gantry crane which uses a magnet for unloading new rails from gondolas, for placing new rails in position to be fed to the production lines and for handling secondhand rails under various conditions, mostly from skid tables to storage.

Almost all remaining features of the complex are for handling and processing



low cost production





EQUIPMENT for picking up jointed strings of released rail includes this rotatable threader box to facilitate inserting string ends.

KEY UNIT of the equipment for loading jointed strings is this pick-up or pusher car. It can load two strings at 120 feet per minute.

secondhand rails and delivering them to the head end of the welding production lines. Facilities designed and installed for this purpose are mechanized and automated to the maximum degree.

● **Four zones.** From an operational standpoint the system for handling individual rails through the plant up to the beginning of the welding production lines is divided into four zones: (1) dismantling, (2) inspection, (3) cropping and (4) marshalling. An operator at each of these locations has controls which permit a high degree of automation in the movement of the rails through the network and to and from the chain conveyor tables.

The operator in each of the zones has control of the movement of rails into and out of his station, either manually or automatically. At the inspection, cropping and marshalling zones this involves calling up rails from the second section of the preceding chain conveyors, such as from table A-2 for the inspection station.

● **Route of secondhand rails.** Secondhand rails start their journey through the plant when the jointed strings are pulled singly by a winch from the rail train and through a series of adjustable lead-in devices that direct the head end of the string into a Holland pusher. This device propels the string into the dismantling station. Here, using Davidson-Kennedy equipment, the nuts at all bolts at each joint are run-off simultaneously by hydraulic wrenches, the bolts are punched out in a single operation with pneumatic rams and the angle bars are knocked off.

When individual rails leave the dis-

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Circle 14 on reader service card

mantling station on a power roller conveyor they pass through a housing in which loose dirt and oil are cleaned from them by a device which uses jets of compressed air under a pressure of 10,000 psi. The rails then pass onto chain-conveyor table A-1 from which they are delivered to table A-2 and thence onto the power roller conveyor leading into the inspection building.

The operator at the inspection station makes a careful visual inspection of each rail as it comes before him on the power roller conveyor. He reads the length from a scale and notes other identifying characteristics, all of which are punched into a computer by means of push-buttons on a console. Each rail is thus given a 10-digit identification number. These numbers are printed by a Teletype machine in the main office of the plant on command from the computer in the inspection station. The purpose is to provide an inventory record at Topeka, Kan., of all secondhand rail on the system.

The computer also does something else—it actuates devices that automatically eject rail from the power roller conveyor to tables S-1 to S-5. Such rails include those that have been classified as scrap, rails that have odd lengths and rails destined to be used in fabricating track panels. Rails from these tables are transferred to storage by the gantry crane.

Another feature of the inspection station consists of devices for indicating the classification of each rail by one, two or three paint marks on the rail head. The paint spots are placed on either end of the rail, depending on the location of the gauge side. They are placed on the head of the rail for the information of the gantry-crane operator when transferring the rails to storage.

On leaving the inspection station, rails destined to be cropped move on the power roller conveyor until they reach chain conveyor table B-1 where they are ejected automatically onto that table. The rails are moved from B-1 to B-2 on command from the operator at the cropping station. They are then in a position to be called up for cropping.

● **Automatic cropping.** Cropping is done by a saw arranged to operate on an automatic cycle. Also, positioning the forward and rear ends of each rail for cropping is accomplished automatically. Generally, 18 inches is cut from the ends of the rails. The cropping operation is designed to cut the ends from 30 rails per hour.

When the cropping operation has been set in the automatic mode the movement of rails from table B-2 to and through the cropping operation and onto either table C-1 or D-1 is entirely automatic. On the other hand, the operator can take over manual control of the individual operations, especially

EQUIPMENT for disjointing released strings includes hydraulic wrenches (left) and hydraulic rams for punching out bolts.

if rails of an odd length are being cropped.

From the C and D tables rails pass onto a power roller conveyor that takes them to tables E or F. These latter tables, as well as tables C and D, are part of a so-called marshalling area from which both new and secondhand rails are fed to the welding production lines.

Since the E and F tables are beyond the end of the crane runway, new rails to be welded are generally deposited by the gantry crane on the C and D tables from which they are moved to tables E and F and thence to the power roller conveyors that feed them to the welding machines. Rails from table E go to production line No. 1; those from table F go to production line No. 2. To permit rails to be turned if necessary for welding there is a turntable in each conveyor line leading to the welders.

So that succeeding rail strings can be connected during loading and unloading operations, and also to allow long strings to be joined in track until thermite welds can be made, two holes are drilled in the end of each end rail in a string. Provision for drilling these holes is made in the marshalling area on rearward extensions of the power roller conveyors that lead to the welders. The drilled rails are placed in a "park" area alongside the roller conveyors until they are needed.

● **Supervision.** W.S. Autrey, chief engineer of the Santa Fe System, has general supervision over the operation of the plant. In charge under Autrey is F.L. Rees, engineer of track. Immediate supervision of the operations is in the hands of R.A. Smith, plant superintendent.

Over-all designs for the plant originated in Autrey's office at Chicago. Major responsibility for design work was in the hands of Ben D. Sorrels, then engineer of track and now division engineer at Amarillo. Details were worked out in the office of E.C. Honath, assistant general manager-engineering of the

Western Lines, Amarillo. C.W. Groh, industrial engineer, maintenance of way, acted as a consultant in some aspects of the design. Installation of the facility was supervised by Frank Rees, Robert Smith and Ben Sorrels, as division engineer at Amarillo.

Except for the gantry crane and the buildings, Holland Co. was prime contractor and had full design responsibility for the project. Power roller conveyors, chain conveyor tables, automatic and manual control systems, and related equipment were furnished and installed by Rexnord's Material Handling Division. Dismantling equipment was furnished by Davidson-Kennedy Co. Santa Fe company forces constructed the tracks.

● **Picking up jointed strings.** The equipment for picking up jointed strings of released rail for shipment to Amarillo is designed to pick up and load two strings simultaneously, each containing thirty-six 39-foot rails. Key unit of this equipment is a pick-up or pusher car, also known as the power car. Auxiliary equipment includes devices on adjacent cars for guiding the strings to the pick-up car and into the proper pockets of the rack cars on which the strings are loaded.

Long strings may be loaded solely by the power provided by the pick-up car. In this case the power car and the rail train remain stationary and the long strings are pulled up to the power car and then pushed into the rail train. However, the method followed on the Santa Fe is to use a locomotive to pull the rail train ahead, causing the strings to be forced through the power car and into the pockets on the rail train, although the pusher devices on the pick-up car are still needed when connections between strings are being made and at other times.

Power for operation of the pusher devices is provided by two 150-hp diesel engines. With both engines operating, two rail strings can be loaded at a rate of 120 feet per minute. If for some reason only one engine is operating, the loading rate for two strings is reduced to 60 feet per minute.

Other cars used with the pusher car are two ramp cars, one on each side of the pusher car, and a threader car. The latter, the lead unit when rails are being loaded, is bi-directional so it can perform its function in either direction without being turned around.

● **Rotatable boxes on threader car.** Principal function of the threader car is to afford guidance for rail strings as they are picked up from the track shoulders. This is done by means of movable and fixed threader boxes. The forward box on each side can not only be adjusted in and out from the side of the car, but it can also be rotated. Purpose of these features is to facilitate the operation of inserting the end of a new string into the threader box. For instance, the box may be rotated to any position necessary to receive the end of a rail, even if the string is lying on its side. In that case the box is then rotated until the rail is upright.

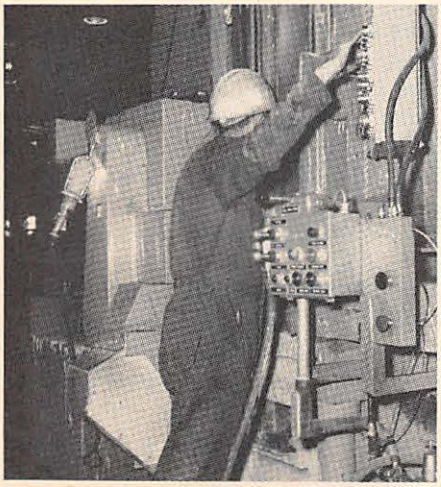
On the deck of the threader car at each end is a jib crane with an air-operated hoist for lifting the ends of long strings so they may be engaged by the forward threader box.

The rack cars into which jointed strings are loaded have roller stands six tiers high with nine rollers in each tier, giving a capacity of 54 rails. The rails are supported on individually mounted flanged rollers. At the center of the train is a specially designed tie-down stand where individual strings are secured against longitudinal movement by bolted fastenings.

On the cars at the ends of the rail train the ends of the strings are supported so they are free to move laterally, the purpose being to accommodate sidewise movement of the rail ends as the train moves around curves. At the other end of each end car is a horizontal member which may be cranked up or down by hand. Its main purpose is to help guide the rail strings into the lead-in stands at Amarillo.

When a train of rails is to be moved over the line a buffer car consisting of a box car loaded with saw dust is coupled on at each end. These cars provide a safety factor in case one or more rails should come loose from the tie-down fastenings, which might happen if an emergency application of the train brakes should be made.

Equipment for the pusher car and the ramp and threader cars was designed and built by Davidson-Kennedy Co. and installed by that company on cars furnished by the Santa Fe. The rail racks, including the tie-down stand, were designed and built by Davidson-Kennedy and shipped to Topeka where they were installed on new roller-bearing cars built for this purpose in Santa Fe shops. ■



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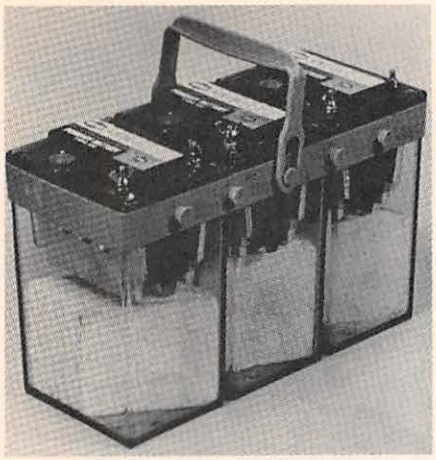
New Products Report



See-through battery meets signal equipment needs

A modular, air-depolarized primary battery meeting all requirements for railroad signal equipment is available from Union Carbide Corp. Features of the Ucar type UC battery include the performance advantages of the carbon-zinc-caustic system and a transparent housing molded of Acrylite MP that permits visual check of the exhaustion level. Each single cell module supplies a nominal voltage of 1.25 and a normal capacity of 1,000 ampere-hours.

Series and/or parallel connections of two or three cell units provide the range of power levels essential to railroad signaling. Acrylite MP, a tough transparent plastic, has the impact resistance necessary to withstand rough handling. The batteries are sold with pure liquid electrolyte already added to minimize installation time and assure adherence to uniform performance standards.

Circle 60 on reader service card

Retaining valve has replacable cartridge

The FB-3 retaining valve introduced by Westinghouse Air Brake for car brake systems features an internal Teflon ball valve enclosed in a cartridge assembly which can be easily replaced to simplify maintenance. The ball valve produces smooth operation, tight sealing and minimum wear for the three-position retainer. The FB-3 is installed on the standard pipe bracket and is completely interchangeable with the standard valves. Low handle force and protection of operating parts against vibration are other features. Long life seals are designed to assure leakage-free operation.

Circle 61 on reader service card

Tension bushings can be used in car and locomotive brake systems

Tension bushings, rolled from spring steel and with a longitudinal split that facilitates insertion, can be used in brake systems on cars and locomotives. The steel is of high elasticity, resilience and wear resistance which allows the bushings to remain tight even if wear should cause the housings to become enlarged. The bushings, from Viking Tension Products, are removable and reusable. The units are particularly suited for applications involving oscillating motion where shock and vibration are prevalent. Lengths vary from ½ to 5 inches and outside diameters from ¾ to 3½ inches.

Circle 62 on reader service card

Railroad caps available in multi-colored patterns

Kromer Cap Co.'s line of railroad caps has grown in sportive colors and unusual designs. The line has over 60 styles in plain, variegated and multi-colored patterns for all seasons; it includes a cool weather, lined cloth helmet. All caps are double stitched, color fast and pre-shrunk.

Circle 63 on reader service card

Herbicide gets EPA approval for industrial uses

Roundup herbicide from Monsonto Co. has received Environmental Protection Agency registration approval for industrial uses. Roundup—a postemergence, non-selective herbicide—controls a broad spectrum of annual and perennial weeds of both grass and broadleaf species. The EPA registration permits use of the herbicide for such industrial commercial applications as along railroad, fuel and power-transmission rights-of-way. Roundup will be sold in five-gallon steel containers; it is classified as a non-persistent herbicide and is inactivated when it comes in contact with the soil. Long-term research indicates mammalian toxicity is a low order and that tolerance of fish and wildlife is high.

Circle 64 on reader service card

NEW LITERATURE

RAILROAD BATTERIES. General Battery Corp.'s bulletin 3-100 outlines cell construction details that explain how extra potential is designed into the company's new line of diesel-starting batteries called the Hi-Roller series.

Circle 70 on reader service card

TRACK QUALITY. A device for measuring the quality of railroad track, developed by Rexnord's Nordberg Machinery Group, Railway Equipment Division, is described in Bulletin No. 74-801.

Circle 71 on reader service card

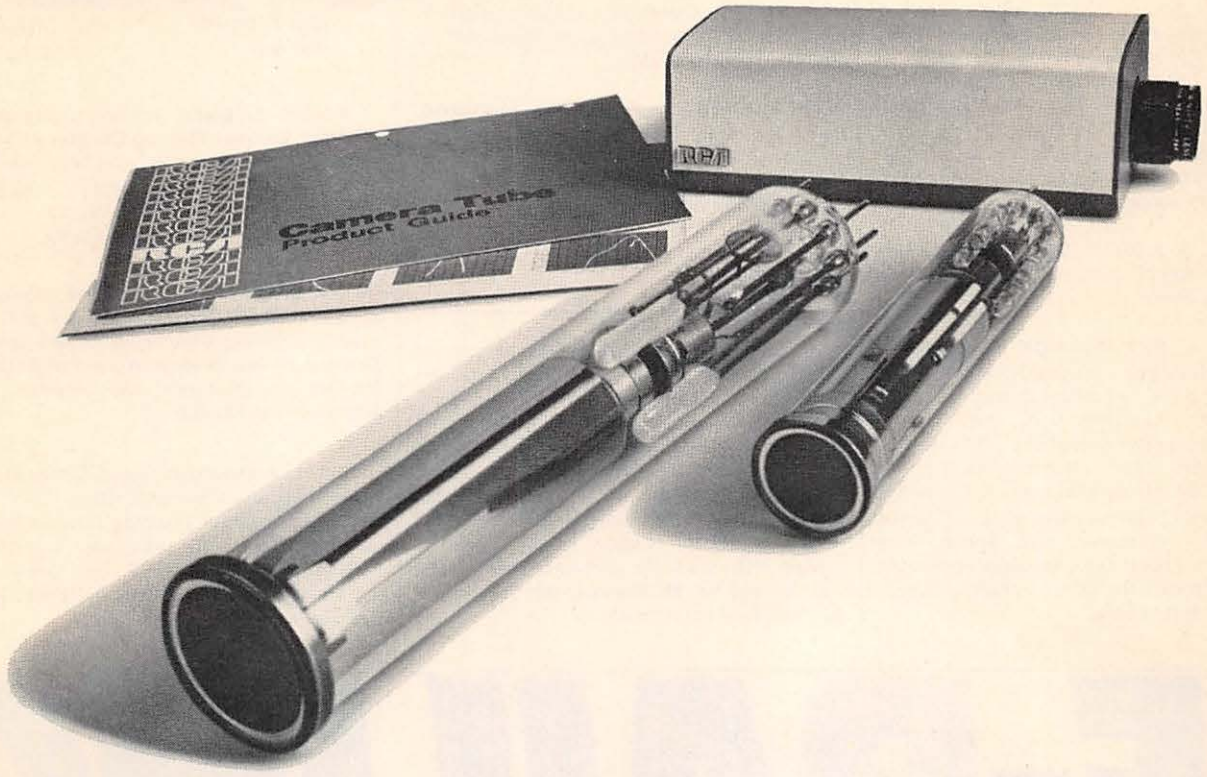
WIRES AND CABLES. A 72-page catalog, "General Electric Wires and Cables," has been published by GE's Wire and Cable Products Department. It contains product feature and application information on power and control cables, portable cables, flexible cords, fixture and motor leads, electronic wires and industrial and communication cables.

Circle 72 on reader service card

CORROSION-RESISTANT STRUCTURES. A fabrication brochure has been issued on corrosion-resistant structural systems created with Fibergrate Corp.'s reinforced plastic grating, stair treads, handrails, shapes, nuts and threaded rod, and assembly hardware and accessories.

Circle 73 on reader service card

Designing or replacing... get big performance at low cost from every RCA vidicon.



Today, RCA vidicons are more economical than ever before. They combine performance features and low prices that are hard to match, whatever your application.

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People in the News

BURLINGTON NORTHERN.—James C. Kenady appointed vice president, industrial development and property management, St. Paul, to succeed **George F. Defiel,** elected president, **Fort Worth & Denver.** Mr. Kenady, who has been vice president, real estate development, will continue to direct that department's activities for an indefinite period.

James N. Bone named assistant chief engineer maintenance, St. Paul.

Ronald J. Zimmerman, assistant trainmaster, North Kansas City, Mo., appointed terminal trainmaster, Galesburg, Ill.

Raymond J. Townsend, industrial development representative, Chicago, named manager, property management there.

CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN.—Jerome A. Dalton named rates manager-natural resources and chemicals.

DENVER & RIO GRANDE WESTERN.—W.T. Boettigheimer, manager-customer services, New York, appointed district manager-sales there, succeeding **G.A. Lee,** who is taking a disability retirement. **D.E. Pricer,** staff assistant, Traffic Department, Denver, succeeds Mr. Boettigheimer. **L.C. Jones** named district representative-sales, Salt Lake City, Utah, succeeding **J.M. Tolich,** who replaces Mr. Pricer. **D.L. Richards** appointed district representative-sales, Denver, succeeding the late **E.R. Young.**

FORT WORTH & DENVER.—George F. Defiel elected president, to succeed **Paul F. Cruikshank,** appointed vice president, **United States Railway Assn.** Mr. Defiel was formerly vice president, industrial development and property management department, **Burlington Northern,** St. Paul.

FRISCO.—P.E. Odom, vice president-management services, named vice president-administration, Springfield, Mo.

PENN CENTRAL.—Robert E. Mortensen, manager-market development-food products, appointed assistant director-market planning, succeeding **R. Thomas Schoonmaker,** now director-automotive marketing.

TRANSIT

The Chicago Transit Authority has created a Department of Law and Claims. The new department will consist of the General Law, Investigations and Claims, Criminal and Traffic Cases, Tort Litigation, and Real Estate sections. **Frank J. Mullen** has been named head of the department and, on an acting basis, head of the General Law and the Investigations and Claims sections. **John J. Devine** will head the Criminal and Traffic section, and **Sal M. Bianchi,** the Tort Litigation and Real Estate sections.

George F. Defiel
FW & D

P.E. Odom
Frisco

Robert J. Dietz, transportation project manager, **Gannett Fleming Corddry & Carpenter, Inc.,** at Detroit, Mich., has been named an associate. Mr. Dietz is currently responsible for planning the proposed People Mover in the Detroit Central Business District.

T.J. Magiera has been named manager of mass transit in charge of the newly created mass transit department, **Rockwell-Standard Division** of **Rockwell International Corp.** Mr. Magiera was formerly sales engineer, Off-Highway Department.

Walter J. Hood has joined **Dalton-Dalton-Little-Newport,** Cleveland, Ohio, as head of the Transportation Planning Department. He succeeds **Melvin R. Lehr,** who transfers to Baltimore, Md., to head the firm's team working on Phase II of the Baltimore Rapid Transit Project.

RE-RAILING POWER

D.D. Huffman
US&S

C.H. Mertz
US&S

C.F. Wert
US&S

Robert D. Bartley
Pullman

Edgar F. Coudal
Pullman Transport

Darrell Armstrong
Jackson Corp.

SUPPLIERS

D.D. Huffman, manager-engineering, **Union Switch & Signal Division** of **WABCO,** Pittsburgh, has been promoted to vice president-engineering. **C.H. Mertz,** manager-manufacturing, has been named vice president-manufacturing. **C.F. Wert,** manager-marketing, has been promoted to vice president-marketing.

Robert D. Bartley has been named manager-public relations, **Pullman Incorporated,** thus rejoining a corporation with which he had been associated for more than 20 years before he left in September 1967 to become associate editor of Railway Age and western editor of Railway Locomotives and Cars, publications of Simmons-Boardman Publishing Corp. Before joining the editorial staff of the Railway Age Group, he was community relations representative for the Butler, Pa., and Bessemer, Ala., plants of Pullman-Standard.

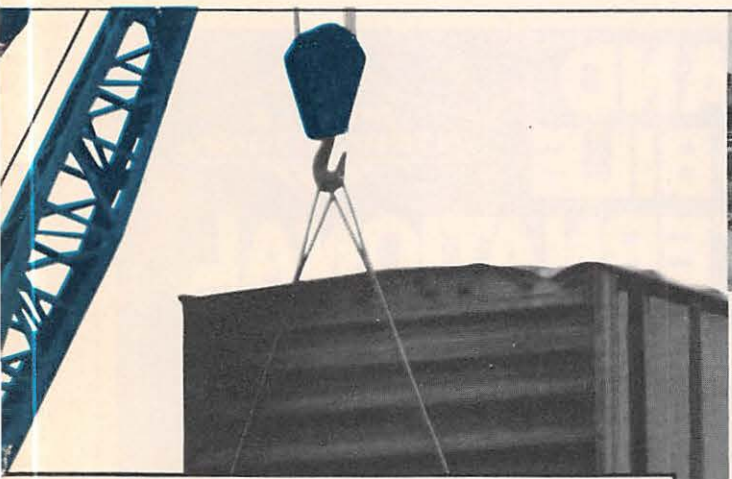
Edgar F. Coudal has been appointed manager, public relations, **Pullman Transport Leasing Co.,** a newly created position. He was formerly a public relations account executive, **Young & Rubicam,** Chicago.

Darrell Armstrong has been named field sales manager, **Jackson Corp.,** Lansing, Ill. Mr. Armstrong has spent many years in the railroad maintenance of way field.

Carl L. Henricks, former southeastern regional sales manager, **Western-Cullen Division, Federal Sign & Signal Corp.,** has been named executive vice president, **National Railroad Construction Corp.,** Atlanta, Ga. Mr. Kenricks will manage the new offices and warehouse space opened for railroad signal installations, surveys, circuit design and engineering for grade crossing protection and warehousing of signal equipment in the Atlanta area. NARCO is a subsidiary of **T. Frederick Jackson, Inc.,** New York, of which **Ronald H. Webster** is president.

National Electric Control Co., Elk Grove Village, Ill., has acquired **G.A.P. Co.** (Gate Arm Products) for the manufacture of grade crossing protection products including wooden and reinforced fibre-glass gate arms. These products will be manufactured by a newly formed company, **National Electric Gate Co.**

Dennis Jones has been named plant superintendent, **Buncher Rail Car Service Co.,** Lynchburg. Va. Mr. Jones joined the firm in March 1973 as production superintendent, with responsibility for all cleaning, painting and car repair work at the plant.



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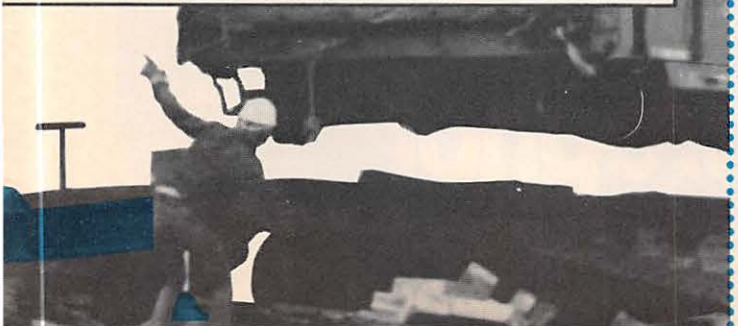

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Circle 19 on Reader Service Card

Railroads push for support

(Continued from page 35)

Secretary of Transportation. And the incumbent administrator, John W. Ingram, is filling this role better than it has been filled before in DOT's brief history (by the way, better than he is sometimes judged in the industry to be filling it).

—Congress has become aware that there really is a railroad problem and, therefore, a national transportation problem. No doubt, the ASTRO/STA campaigns helped immensely, as did the support for STA from other surface-transportation industries. So did the enlistment of a brilliant activist to the cause, Rep. Brock Adams, a Washington Democrat.

● **At the same time...** Now, to the flip-side—those aspects of the future that remain worrisome:

—Top management has to continue to have faith, faith that the p.r. man (or whatever his title) is going to do the most professional job he is capable of. If an individual is provably incompetent, certainly somebody new will be moved in. But the standards for p.r., just the same as the standards in any other department, have to be fair. In other words, it's been a long time since anyone really made a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

—In public relations, in advertising, in trying to associate with those on the "outside" generally, railroads have too often earned a "fire and fall back" reputation. Consistency has been lacking, and this applies both to the AAR and to individual railroads. This may be a bad for-instance, but for instance if you asked people today "Who is Wally Schirra?" maybe a fair number would remember that he was Walter Cronkite's partner on tv coverage of space-shots, maybe fewer still would recall that he was actually the first man-in-space to be launched from Cape Canaveral—and you might find a couple who would say "Oh, yeah, he's the guy who kept asking about who needs America's railroads." Fame is fleeting, and so is public recall.

—A Congress worried about other things could figure that passage of Northeast legislation was enough. Congress likes to do things like this, i.e., handle in one fashion or another an immediate problem and neglect others until they also become "immediate." But Congress does react to what the constituents think, or so we have always been led to believe. That is why the grass-roots effort cannot be left to decay.

—Rail management, immediately and farther below the top, has to recognize that they're living in a fishbowl. Operating management, in particular, has to know that so many decisions are going to have a public impact. Operating management ought to want the inputs p.r. can provide, not so much to change decisions but to adjust them and to find a way to get the same results without giving the public another reason for blacklisting the railroad. The same goes for the lawyers. And traffic people.

Richard E. Briggs is the AAR's director of information and public affairs (as well as assistant to the president), and the whole situation could perhaps be summed up as Briggs did late last year:

"We are getting the best performance in railroad history, and it is our job to make this known and recognized by the general public—the press, shippers, public officials and, above all, by our employees who have done the actual work and who should take great pride in passing the word. If we do the job well, we can gain the kind of respect for our industry that it deserves, and we can greatly smooth the way for future growth and progress.

"The basics of an outstanding record are there to tell. . . .It's time the public and the railroads got to know each other better. In fact, there may not be much time left if they don't." ■

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Market Outlook

CARLOADINGS

Loadings of revenue freight in the week ended April 20 totaled 520,276 cars, according to the Association of American Railroads. This was an increase of 16,740 cars or 3.3%, compared with the previous week, and an increase of 8,835 cars, or 1.7%, compared with the corresponding week last year. Ton-miles generated by carloadings in the week ended April 20 are estimated at 16.6 billion, an increase of 3.8% above the corresponding week of 1973.

REVENUE FREIGHT CARLOADINGS

Commodity	Apr. 20 week	Apr. 13 week
Grain	28,413	27,565
Farm products	9,101	8,785
Metallic ores	30,772	24,206
Coal	96,863	96,311
Crushed stone, gravel & sand	27,818	25,783
Nonmetallic minerals	16,259	15,888
Grain mill products	18,077	18,189
Food and kindred products	21,375	21,198
Primary forest products	24,235	25,367
Lumber & wood products (except furniture)	16,708	16,886
Pulp, paper & allied products	23,035	22,950
Chemicals & allied products	30,296	29,807
Petroleum products	8,339	8,020
Stone, clay & glass products	21,859	20,261
Coke	9,049	8,129
Metals & products	27,673	26,581
Motor vehicles & equipment	22,688	20,536
Waste & scrap materials	18,316	17,847
Forwarder & shipper assn. traffic	10,214	10,939
All other carloads	58,795	58,830
LCL traffic	391	369
Total cars loaded	**520,276**	**504,447**
Cumulative total, 16 weeks	1974	1973
	8,198,387	**8,104,900**
Estimated revenue ton-miles (billions) 16 weeks	260.4	252.2

PIGGYBACK LOADINGS

U.S. piggyback loadings for the week ended April 13, which included Good Friday, a holiday for railroad workers, totaled 27,447 cars (8.2% below the corresponding week last year) and 47,647 trailers and/or containers (down 8.2% from 1973). Cumulative volume for the first 15 weeks of 1974 is 475,263 cars (10.7% above 1973) and 824,651 trailers and/or containers (up 11.8% from the comparable period last year).

IN CANADA

7 days ending	Tons of Revenue Freight	Cumulative Totals
April 7, 1974	4,564,374	56,077,504
April 7, 1973	4,532,178	57,765,084

● *Louisville & Nashville.*—Ordered 80 operable weight responsive car retarders from WABCO's Union Switch & Signal Division. The retarders, Model 50B, will be installed as skate retarders on all bowl tracks in L&N's classification yards at Atlanta, Ga., and Birmingham, Ala.

● *Montreal Urban Community Transit Commission.*—Awarded a $32-million contract to Canron Ltd. to provide propulsion systems for 282 new cars.

● *Norfolk & Western.*—Ordered 500 50-ft, 70-ton general service box cars from Southern Iron & Equipment for $10 million.

● *Taiwan Railway Administration.*—Ordered 74 Model E42C 4,200-hp electric locomotives from General Electric at an approximate cost of $40 million.

● *Freight-car orders and deliveries.*—The following report has been received from the AAR and the ARCI:

DELIVERED

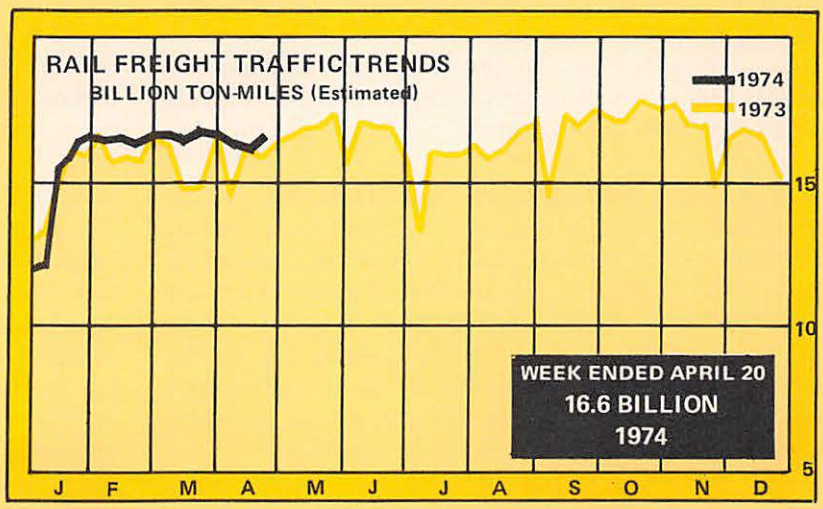
	Mar. '74	Feb. '74	Mar. '73
Built new by carbuilders	5,112	3,876	4,912
Built new in R.R. shops	243	127	245
Built new—total	5,355	4,003	5,157
Rebuilt	23	41	78
TOTAL DELIVERED	**5,378**	**4,044**	**5,235**

ORDERED

To be built new by carbuilders	10,345	6,231	5,433
To be built new in R.R. shops	169	500	51
To be built new—total	10,514	6,731	5,484
To be rebuilt	500	0	4
TOTAL ORDERED	**11,014**	**6,731**	**5,488**

ON ORDER AND UNDELIVERED

	April 1, '74	Mar. 1, '74	April 1, '73
To be built new by carbuilders	75,493	70,922	24,140
To be built new in R.R. shops	4,232	4,306	2,395
To be built new—total	79,725	75,228	26,535
To be rebuilt	1,018	541	541
TOTAL ON ORDER	**80,743**	**75,769**	**27,076**



Source: Association of American Railroads

Moving People

AMTRAK OPENS CHICAGO SHOP

Amtrak has opened its new maintenance center for turbine-powered trainsets and rail diesel cars(RDCs) at Brighton Park southwest of downtown Chicago. A pair of French turbine (RTG) trains have operated between Chicago and St. Louis since October 1973 and RDCs are being utilized on other Amtrak routes out of Chicago. Servicing for all this self-propelled equipment, except heavy engine overhaul and wheel mounting, is being performed at Brighton Park which has the capacity for handling six RTGs and eight RDCs at one time. Amtrak's emphasis on "continous maintenance" allowed the RTG trains to achieve 98.6% "availability and completion" records for 1973 and perfect records for February and March 1974. The shop is the first to be owned and operated by Amtrak.

YUNICH HEADS MTA; RONAN AT PORT AUTHORITY

Dr. William J. Ronan has been succeeded as chairman of New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority by David L. Yunich, a retired department store executive. Ronan, previously a board member and vice chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, has been elevated to the chairmanship of that bi-state agency. Yunich and Ronan have noted the "unique opportunity of parallel efforts by the two agencies." Yunich hailed the new public commitment to mass transportation evolved while Ronan headed MTA and announced that he expects to emphasize the marketing of the transit and commuter services which are now operated in the New York Metropolitan region. Ronan has come to head PANYNJ at a time when both states are moving to increase the agency's participation in money-losing transit through cancellation of legal covenants that prohibited any such operations other than Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) which has been a PA property for over a decade.

BUFFALO GETTING REVISED TRANSIT PLAN

The plan for Buffalo's 11-mile rail transit system has been revised to provide for 75% subway, instead of the 40% originally projected. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority would now have to budget nearly $500 million for the system, double the amount estimated in 1971. While virtual doubling of the amount of underground construction has been significant, the general upturn in all costs was the major factor and certain details have been eliminated or scaled down to control costs, consultants have informed NFTA. The line extending northeast from downtown Buffalo is estimated to have 170,000 daily riders by 1995. If construction started in 1975, the line would not be operational until 1981.

UMTA HAS RESEARCH DATA SERVICE

Within UMTA's newly created Office of Transit Management will be the Transit Research Information Center (TRIC) that can provide technical information on all UMTA-sponsored projects and studies. One-page abstracts of selected reports are being distributed monthly from TRIC which, according to UMTA's Frank C. Herringer, will serve to increase the flow of information about UMTA-supported work. The abstracts will be available from UMTA's Transit Information Center, which is at 2100 2nd Street, S.W., Room 6412, Washington, D.C. 20590.

STAUFFER HEADING HIGH SPEED CENTER

Jack B. Stauffer has been appointed director of DOT's High Speed Ground Test Center at Pueblo, Col. Stauffer had previously been acting chief of FRA's Rail Systems Division. When completed, the Pueblo facilities will contain a variety of test tracks and guideways for testing conventional, transit and advanced equipment, and the world's most advanced computer-controlled rail/wheel simulator in the Vehicle Dynamics Laboratory.

MEXICO CITY METRO IS EXPANDING

A 13-kilometer extension of existing lines of Mexico City's Metro system is expected to increase patronage to 2.5 million riders daily. The fuel shortage has speeded up the planning process and already Metro officers have met with French representatives (the technology and equipment for the existing lines all came from France).

SOACs READY FOR REVENUE TESTS

The pair of State-of-the-Art Transit Cars (SOAC) are beginning their service on operating transit properties with their arrival in New York. The two vehicles, built for UMTA to incorporate the best of available technology, have undergone extensive testing at the DOT High-Speed Ground Test Center at Pueblo, Col. One car, damaged in a collision during the tests, has been restored. Now the two cars will spend several months on transit lines in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Chicago.

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Viewpoint

TMMF adds impact to the railroad scene

It's a rara avis indeed—the phoenix turning itself into ashes and then rising up whole to fly again. But, every once in a while, a phoenix comes along—even in the railroad business. And the rare bird that qualifies at the moment goes by the initials TMMF—for Transportation Materials Management Forum.

For years and years, there was the Purchases and Stores Division of the AAR. Once, it was alive and well. But then it went into decline, to the point where those who were being polite called it moribund. So the P&S Division more or less transformed itself into the Purchases and Materials Management Division, and for a while—a little while—the P&MM Division seemed to have new life. Then, it, too, seemed to be stricken with the blahs.

What next? Well, next the Transportation Materials Management Forum—something concocted by a group of materials-management people who thought there was a place for such an organization. They decided to try to make a go of it (1) outside the AAR, and (2) with broad transportation membership. TMMF has now had its third major meeting, its second with a co-sponsorship by the Railway Progress Institute. And, while TMMF has yet to attract much participation from outside the railroad industry, it has made a tremendous success of bringing together for open discussion railroad materials-management people and railway suppliers; at the 1974 meeting, just concluded in Chicago, more than 420 people showed up.

The people-figure itself is significant: Major suppliers, many of them, are booked into 1975 or beyond, and yet the ratio of suppliers-to-railroad officers was roughly seven-to-one. That says something about the viability of the supply industry, and about its interest in looking beyond today's backlog. Secondly, TMMF has become known as a meeting that *does* something—and there are so many meetings that can't earn that comment. TMMF has been able to attract speakers who have something to say; it has also been able to schedule workshops that work.

WHAT'S BEHIND TMMF's SUCCESS

How come? First, a number of railroad officers believed in the broadening of the materials-management function—which is to say that the job isn't just buying and keeping store anymore; it has to do with the total job of managing what railroads acquire. Second, the old AAR-oriented format seemed to be sublimely dullsville, and not very valuable either, with standing subject committees and annual reports—all of which seemed to say "We're continuing to look into this." And third, there were people like Missouri Pacific's Harold Hoffmeister, Union Pacific's Max Hower, Rock Island's John Burnett, NW's Ed Gentsch, BN's Guy de Lambert and Grant Vietsch of Railway Systems and Management Association who thought materials-management could develop a valid forum. That's a partial list, because there were more than two dozen roads represented when TMMF was formed, but it may do to make the point.

And the point? The point, at long last, is that *all* railroad groups—those within the AAR structure and those on the outside—might undertake a bit of self-examination, to see if they're really serving a purpose. Are they holding meetings for the sake thereof? Or are they holding meetings with meaning?

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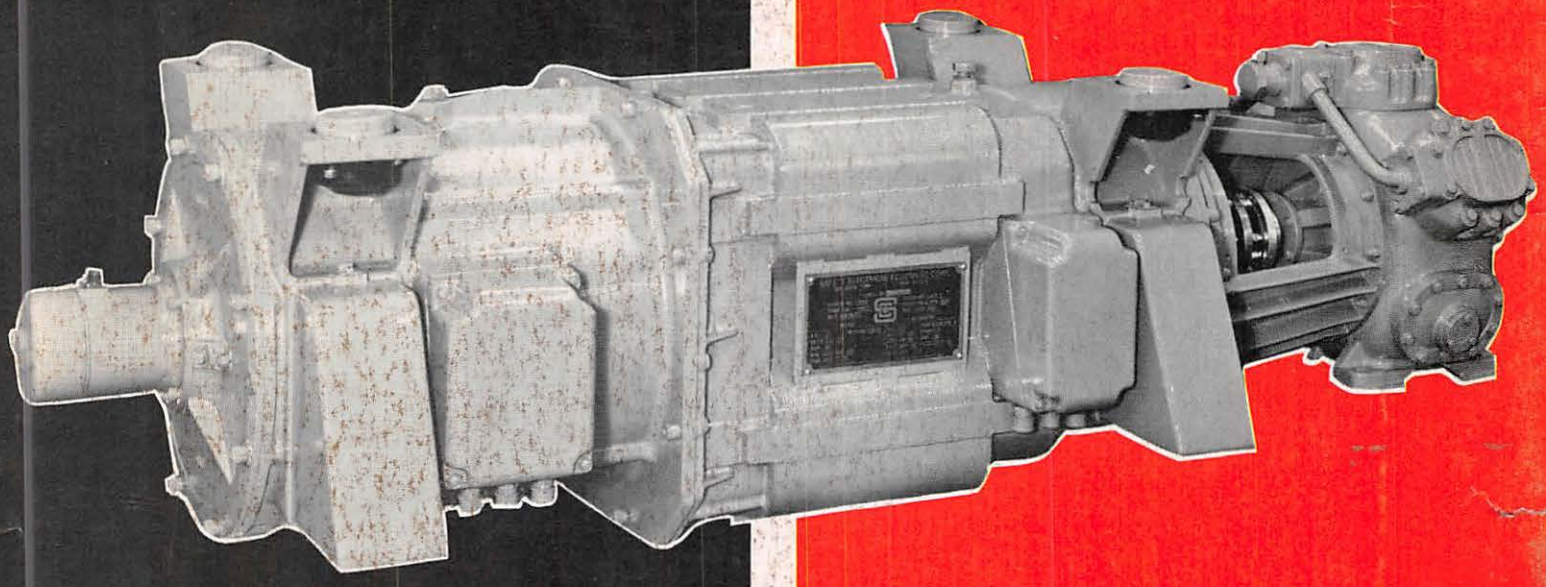

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